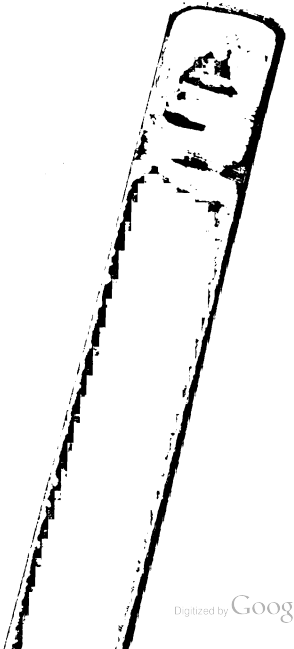
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google books

https://books.google.com



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

1231 a . 43 .

Digitized by Google

THE HISTORY OF THE ANGELICALL VIRGIN GLORIOVS S. CLARE, DEDICATED TO THE QVEENS MOST EXCELLENT MAIESTY.

EXTRACTED OVT OF THE R. F. LVKE Wadding his Annalls of the Freer Minors chiefly by Francis Hendricq *and now donne into English.*

By sister *Magdelen Augustine*, of the holy Order of the *Poore Clares* in Aire.

Imprinted at DOVAY, by MARTIN BOCART vnder the signe of Paris.

M. DC. XXXV.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TO THE MOST HIGH
AND MIGHTY PRINCESSE,
MARY HENRIETTE,
QVEENE OF GREAT
BRITAINE,
FRANCE AND IRELAND:
AND SOVVERAIGNE LADY
OF THE ILES OF THE
BRITISH OCEAN.

MAY it pleaſe your moſt gracious Maieſtie;

BEING *to publish to the view of the World, the Life of the Mirrour and Princeſſe of Religious Foundreſſes S. Clare; and being, according to the Cuſtome no leſſe frequented than laudable, to bethink our ſelues of ſome grand Perſonage, vnder Whoſe Protection it might paſſe, it ſeemed to vs impertinent to entertaine any long Conſult, to that purpoſe, ſeeing your Maieſtie, did at the very firſt deliberation, occurre to our thoughts, accompanied with many Titles clayming to your matchles Excellencie, the Dedicatory addreſſe and Protection of the Worke. For firſt, if We did contemplate the Royall and thrice renow-*

Digitized by Google

and Prerogatiue of France, *from whence your Maiestie is extracted, it seemeth a thing proper, if not hereditary, to that Princely familie, to be addicted to the children of our* Seraphical *Father*, S. Francis. To whom God communicated Abraham's priuiledge (Genes. 12.) I will blesse them that blesse thee, and curse them that curse thee. In so much, as that great Honour of France, and glory of Kings, S. Lewis who (*being by his Mother forher singular Deuotion to our holy Father, tendred to the* Freers *to be educated by them in their Monastery*) *sayd: that if he could part and diuide himselfe in two, he would bequeath one part of himselfe to the* Freers: *but being he was not able, for the important affaires of his Crowne, in so strict a manner to become a child of our holy Father, he made himself a Member of his* Third Order; *for which reason, he hath merited an immortall glory in the Roll of the saints of that Order. And indeed, What your Maiesties Deuotion hath been towards* S. Francis, *you haue yeelded sufficient proof and testimonie thereof; when before your comming into* England (*as we are informed*) *together with your Royall Brother* K. Lewis, *now prepotent Monarch of* France, *you publikly at* Paris, *with him, receiued* S. Francis *Cord, a* Symbole *and* Recognisance *of the Sacred Passion of our Souuereigne Redeemer, for which this Sodalitie is enstiled the* Arch confraternitie, *as hauing a more honorable Institution and Dedication than any other Confraternitie what soeuer. Againe: if we proposed to our Consideration, the supereminencie of this first* Plant

of

of S. Francis, I meane our holy Mother S. Clare: we shall find that she by singular Preroga tiue of Euangelicall Pouertie, both in prop and in common, (which neuer any other Religi us Foundresse professed before her:) merited to be in hat eminent degree so espowsed to her Lord Christ ejus through Poore, yet a King, that she must needs consequently also be (as We may so say) a Princesse and Queen. Which being so, she would esteeme it an abridgment or disparagement to her Honour, to be recommended to the fauorable acceptance of any other than a Queen: and especially to such a one as We haue formerly delineated and represented. Finally: if We did but set before our eyes the manifold starres of virtues, which render this saint most illustrious, we shall find also your Maiestie, by a certaine semblance, to be also conspicuous for the varietie of your many perfections enuironning and compassing your Princely Robes. For should We with S. Bonauenture, Seraphical Doctour of the Church, proclaime her most endeared to God, the flower of the Spring, yeelding a most fragrant odour, and a most refulgent bright-shining starre. The same (Without offence) We would proportionably depredicate of your Maiestie. If rauished with her eminencie, We should breake forth, With Pope Alexander the Fourth, into that admiration, O admirable glorie or Claritie of B. S. Clare, which by how much the more studiously in all things she is contemplated: by so much the more she appeares Cleare, Renowned & Resplendent: The same admiracion of your

Highnes Excellencie in perfection, obseruing a due [illegible] n, would we vtter and promulge: did we [illegible] w your Maiesties Feminine *and Religious* [illegible]ie, *not to delight to view the Register* [illegible] *incomparable and indeed vnspeakables* [illegible] *and likewise, did we not vnderstand full* [illegible] *your Profession is not to celebrate (Rhetorically) or p*[illegible], *but to pray incessantly.* We *will therefore, euer pray the only* Ruler *of* Princes, *which hath set a* Diademe *of pure gold vpon your head, to preuent you with the blessings of his goodnes, and grant vnto your Maiestie a long and prosperous ioynt-reigne with our Soueraigne Liege-Lord,* King Charles, *and a glorious Race from your Royall loynes to the Crowne. The enioyance of which happines that you may, by the powerfull intercession of our* All Immaculate *Lady, the Blessed Virgin* Mary: *his great seruant the* Seraphicall *Father, and the Angelicall Virgin our holy Mother* S. Clare, (*whose Life heer wee prostrate in al, humility, tender to your* Gracious *hands*) *which happines* (*we say*) *that your Maiestie may long heer, and in the future for euer and euer, in full possession obtaine, wee shall professe our vnworthy selues euer to be, and remaine.*

YOVR MAIESTIES

Most humble, and dayly
deuoted Beads-women

The English poore-Clares
of Aire.

Digitized by Google

TO THE READER.

Gentle Reader:

Loe heer presented to thy view, the Life of a Saint; of *Feminine* Sexe, but *Masculine* Virtue. I will not, by fore speaking Her praises, prevent the Book, but to prepare thee, to reade it with better profit, is my present Desſigne. Thou mayst (haply) find therein to please thy curiositie, and to polish thy vnderstanding; but the mortified *Recluse*, that trauelled in this Translation, had an ayme at thy greater Benefit. God Almighty hath made His Saints renowned for Virtue, that they might be exemplary; and they which commended their doeings to Posteritie, or do represent them to the view of present tymes, wish this only Reward of their Industry, that others be excited to the imitation of their Heroicke actions: gladly aduenturing on the Censure of Many, yf they may procure the spirituall cõmoditie of a Few. Say not, I am vnwilling to walk this way; for I am not bound to perfection: rather esteem thy selfe bound, and deferre not thy endeauours to become perfect. It is true, their obli-

gation

...'s way is greater, that lye vnder the Command of a Solemne Vow; but for as much ...all are obliged to walke in the wayes of virtue, and it is not lawfull to stop, til we arriue to the highest point, therefore to Perfection all are bound. And because Perfection can not be attained, without fit meanes; and a prudent choise is requisite in this regard: therefore, albeit None, of *Necessitie*, yet in *Congruitie*, All are bound, to make such elections as may most readily conduct them to that Noble end whereunto they aspire. It is no disparagement to other Religious Foundresses, or the deuout and zealous followers of their holy Institutes, to affirme, that (herein) B. S. *Clare* hath surpassed them all: and in Her (though a Wonder of women) it is lesse admirable, yf we recount from whom she ...eiued Her Forme of Liuing. For as that great Deliuerer of the Law of Nature, hauing held fourtie dayes conferance with God in *Mount Sinai*, Was priuiledged from erring in his directions to the People, so long as he kept him to the *patterne that was shewed him in the Mount*: so that greater *Patriarck S. Francis*, after fourtie dayes familiar entercourse with the World's Redeemer, in *Mont-Aluerne*, hahauing receiued a better Law, a *Rule* of higher perfection, and descending from the Mount (not only with glory in his face, but the sacred Wounds of our Sauiours dread Passion in his hands, feet and side) deliuered to his Brethren and followers to the World's end, the sublime

Exod. 25

Institute

Institute of *Euangelicall pouertie*: and according to this *Patterne*, and by aduise of this *Vnerring* Directour, *B. S. Clare* began Her Order, which hath since beene propagated as farre as the World is Christned. It is this transcendent *Pouertie* (courteous Reader) this perfect abdication of all manner of proprietie, not only in proper (which other Religious Orders haue) but in common also (the distinctiue cognisance of S. *Francis* children) which I haue to commend to Thee, as the most compẽdious way to perfection heer, and immortalitie hereafter. Is it not a wonder, that this Angelicall Virgin, hauing cast away all care of temporall things, should be in continuall care, how she might leaue this *Patrimonie* to her children, that they might enioy *Nothing*; making this Her instant Suite to the See Apostolique, and greatly exulting, when she had gained this *Priuiledge*? And yet they will cease to wonder, that consider, what extraordinary *priuiledges* this sacred *Pouerty* hath annexed to it. There would be no end in reeiting the many Elogies giuen by pious and deuout Persons to this Soueraigne Lady, this *Euangelicall pouerty*: but let it not seeme tedious that I recount some of Her *Prerogatiues*, confirmed to Her by *Patient* of holy writ.

1. Art thou Poore? then thou art *Rich*. A Paradoxe, you say. 'Tis easily proued *Pouertie* is the *Riches* which purchaseth Heauen. *The Hungry* (the poore) *he hath filled with good things*,

Luc. 1. *and the Rich he hath sent away empty.*

2. Art thou *Poore*? by relinquishing all. *Not only in preparation of mynd, but also effectually for the loue of God.* It is an Argument of thy perfection, *If thou wilt be perfect goe and sell all &c.* Matth. 19.

3 Art thou *Poore*? thy prayers haue ready accesse and present speed at the Throne of Grace. *The poore man hath cried and our Lord hath heard him.*

4. Art thou *Poore*? Thou shalt obtaine pardon and mercy at God's hand. *He will spare the poore and the needy.*

5. Art thou *Poore*? Thou art highly dignifyed and ennobled. *Their name shalbe honorable before him.* To which sense our B. Sauiour spake, when hauing giuen S. Peter his reward of pouertie Matth. 19 he addeth: *and many shalbe* Psal. 71 first, *that are* last, *and* last (that is, in celestiall renowne) *that are* first (to wit here in temporall riches and dignities.)

6. Art thou *Poore*? Thou shalt be filled with all manner of comfort. *Thou hast prepared in thy sweetnes for the Poore of God.*

7. Art thou *Poore*? Thou shalt be protected from violence; and they shalbe smitten that offer injury to thee. *Doe not violence to the poore, neither oppresse the needy in the gate, because our* Psal. 33 *Lord will iudge his cause, and will pierce them that haue pierced his soule.* And, *He shall saue* Prou. 22 *the children of the* Poore, Psal. 71 *and humble the calumniator.*

8. Art

8. Art thou *Poore*? Then art thou like to Christ, *who* (as witnesseth the Apostle) *for your sake was made* poore, *whereas he was* rich, *that by his* pouertie *you might* be rich. And, heare Christ himselfe: *Vnles euery one of you renounceth all that he possesseth he can not be my disciple.* Luc. 14. 2. Cor. 8

9. Art thou *Poore*? Thou hast gained a hauen of securitie; thou art freed from cares in the house, and impediments in the way. When K. *Ioachim* was led into Captiuity, all the Princes and Noblemen were caryed away also, *and nothing was left* (sayth the Scripture) *saue the* poore *sort of the People of the Land.* 4. Reg. 24.

10. Art thou *Poore*? Thou art freed from that Curse. *Woe vnto you that are Rich, for you haue your consolation.*

11. Art thou *Poore*? God will himselfe be solicitous of thee, & will inspire others to releeue thee, to their vnspeakable benefit. *But I am a begger and poore: our Lord is carefull of me.* psalm. 39. (a priuiledge which the Royall Prophet calleth *memoriam mirabilium*: psalm. 110.) And, *Blessed is the man that vnderstandeth concerning the needy and the poore: in the Euill day our Lord will deliuer him* Psal. 40. whence *Tobias* animateth his Sonne: saying, *Thou dost treasure vp to thy selfe a good reward in the day of necessities: because Almes deliuereth from all sinne and from Death, and will not suffer the soule to goe into Darknes.* Chap. 4. Psal. 39.

12. Art thou *Poore*? Thou shalt assuredly attaine *Saluation*, and yf by a perfit renunciation

of All, the prerogatiue of eminent glory. And *euery one that hath left house or brethren &c. for my names sake, shall receiue an hundred fold and shall possesse life euerlasting.* Matth. 19. *and you shall* (vers. precedent) *sit vpon twelue seates iudging the twelue Tribes of Israel.*

Nay, theirs is the kingdome of Heauen. Matt. 5. *Blessed are Poore for theirs is the kingdome of Heauen.* Ponder the word, *is*: He speaketh not in the *Future*, as in the other beatitudes. Whence S. Bernard. *What a strong wings is Pouertie, whereby we haue a sudden flight to Heauen? For in the other vertues which follow, the promise runnes in the future tense: but to Pouertie it is rather* giuen *than* promised, *whence it is said in the* present *tense, because theirs is the kingdome of Heauen: but in the rest, they* shall *inherit: they* shall *be comforted: they* shall *possesse, &c.* So He.

Loe heer the *Patrimonie* of the Poore: *twelue* Honours or *Priuiledges*: an ample prouision. So well assured, that you may call them the *twelue Articles of the* Poore *mans Creed*: rather, *Symbolum Apostolorum*, the *Badge* and cognisance of the *Apostles*: the contents of their *Obedience*, when they were dismissed by their grand Maister and Superior, on their Embassie to all quarters of the World. *Possesse neither Siluer nor gold nor money in your purse, neither a Wallet nor staffe nor shoes to your feet.* &c. Hence it is that our Holy Mother the Church hath graced the *Institute* of the *Seraphicall Father*, with the Title of *Apostolicall*, calling their manner of

Liuing,

Liuing, the *Rule of most eminent perfection*, and their *Powertie, Euangelicall*, that treads in the steps of ho'y S. *Francis*, so neerly assimilating them to Christ and his Apostles, that no Rank of poore, Religious or others, can so iustly claime to that high priuiledge, the greatest of those formerly recited.

Now Beloued, yf this discourse haue giuen thee any rellish of the Way of Perfection, attend to thy Vocation. Thou wanteſt not glorious Precedents to set before thee. Consider Him, who (as yf Earth afforded something more precious than Heauen) came to seek Powerty heer, which there was not to be found. Whence S. Bernard, sweetly: *Powertie could not be found in Heauen. Now on earth was abundance of this kind, and man knew not the worth of it. Our Lord (therfore) the Sonne of God, enamoured on thy Powertie, descended from Heauen, to Espouse Her to himselfe, and by the account which he held of Her, to make her deare and amiable to vs also.* (O worthy of worthies which the world sets so litle by and is not worthy of!) And be secure, that this thy Christian fortitude shall be gloriously crowned. For yf his *Powertie* made vs *Rich* (as testifieth the Apostle) what shall his *Riches* doe? Doubtles, He that was *Rich* with his Father, but *poore* with vs, *Rich* in Heauen, but *poore* on Earth, a *Rich* God, but a *poore* man: shall soone change our Powertie into *Riches*, our Sack-cloth into Stoles of immortalitie, our teares into ioy and exultation, our momentanie suffering into

Bliſſe World without end.

There occurreth now to aduertiſe thee of ſome things before I take my penne from the paper: firſt that there are ſome ſworne enemies (howſoeuer they diſguiſe themſelues) of Poore Religious, that can not endure to ſee them meritoriouſly exerciſe their humble profeſſion euen to begge only that which is neceſſary for clothing and foode to ſuſtaine life in the ſeruice of God, as though this, were to ſeeke after riches, to heape vp treaſures & the like: which Religious no leſſe abhorre & contemne then they maliciouſly impoſe vpō them, to impaire their Credits vitiating according to their vſuall manner that which is truly laudable: to whom appertaineth thoſe words of S. Baſile Conſt. Mon. c. 7. That ſuch ſeculars hath he knowes not what ſtrange conceit of Religious as if togeather with there ſtate they had preſently changed their nature, and were not men, but of ſome other farre different mold: and conſequently they wrong the ſeruants of God, & think ſometimes, that they muſt ſcarce eate meate, as if they were not made of flesh and bloud: and if they ſee anie of them attend to the neceſſities of their bodie, they load them with reproaches and ſlanders, and turning their calumniations from one vpon all the reſt, they cal them all glutrons and belli-Gods, & think not how themſelues doe dayly feaſt it, and though they eate often in a day, and cram themſelues with a great deale of

flesh

meate, & powre downe wine by whole bowle-fuls, yet they gape after meate, as dogs that are let looſe out of their chayne haſte ſtarued. Thus ſpeaketh S. *Baſil* in defence of Religious people.

Secondly, I truſt, that as the deſire of thy ſpirituall profit cauſed the vndertaking of this tranſlation (which is totally out of the R. F. *Francis Hendriques*) that thou wilt be pleaſed, of thy courteſie, to correct patiently, and couer charitably the faults eſcaped, both in the print, and English. Thus, wiſhing thee (deare Reader, by the peruſall of this little volume, all furtherance in vertue, either by admiring Gods goodneſſe, and power in his Saints, (in whom he is admirable) or by reducing to practiſe that which with proportion ſuites with thy ſex, or ſtate; minde-full of that of S. *Auguſtine*; that, *the examples of the Iuſt are not propoſed to our view that wee ſhould be Iuſtifyed by them, but that by imitation of them, we may likewiſe merit to be Iuſtifyed by their Iuſtifyer*: I will forceaſe to detaine you any longer.

ADIEV.

LO here we may behold bare-footed Clare.
Her Damsels eake (though noble) bare-foote are:
I à spute with my selfe what shall be done.
By these so royal Ladies without shoone.
Doth it by IESVS *will to their lot fall,*
To prepare Morters for the Churches wall?
Yes sure, Clare was a Morter treading Dame,
The Morter was riches, base pleasures, fame,
To trample on such Morter Clare did vse,
This was the reason why shee wore no shoes:
And that trash with whose lone the world doth burne
Her choister of-spring with their feete doe spurne.
Doe we not see vvhilst these such Morter tread,
The Woeman *bruising the old serpents head.*
IESVS *to Francis, hate Clare did Preach,*
And all of powertie a lesson teach.
She learnes her Nunn in spirit to be poore
And then what nature askes to vse no more:
Nay the strict lawes of powertie are such
That often-times it must not haue so much.
For where sufficiencie, nothing doth want:
Tis certaine that there Powertie is scant.
Where transitorie things abundant are,
There we doe want true daughters of poore Clare.
Each Nun must be familiar with these foure
Daughters of powertie all Christned poore.
Poore fare, poore Clothes, poore lodging, and poore cell.
Let her not thinke her selfe in health, not, Well,
Vnlesse to these foure sisters whom her God
So much affeemes, shee ioyne her selfe the od.

Mr. Iohn Abbot in his Poeme of the Name of Iesus.

Digitized by Google

THE HISTORY OF THE ANGELICALL VIRGIN GLORIOVS Ste. CLARE, MATCHLESSE PATTERNE OF RELIGIOVS DISCIPLINE. AND FOVNDRESSE OF THE POORE DAMES VVLGARLY STYLED THE POORE CLARES.

How saint Francis repaires three Churches.

CHAP. I.

THE glorious and Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* most valourous and thrice renowned Captaine & Renewer of the Apostolicall Order of the poore Mendicants in the beginning of his Conuersion, going forth of the City of *Assisium* with intent to seeke out some

S. Bonauent. in the life of saint Fran. c. 2

Digitized by Google

§. 2. Chron. l. 6. l. ch. 3.

solitarie retirement: there to apply himselfe vnto mentall prayer, he passed neare vnto a Church of S. Damian which for the great Antiquity was neare an vtter ruine and decay; the Saint moued by the holy Ghost entred therin, and falling on his knees, before the Image of the *Crucifix*, he founde his soule replenished with admirable consolation, when full repleat with ardent feruour, hee presented and tendred three seuerall times, at the throne of the diuine Maiestie this humble supplication. O *high and glorious God* Iesus Christ *Redeemer of the world, illuminate the darknesse of my heart and endow me with true faith, constant hope perfect and inflamed Charity, and the knowledge of thee my God: so as I may euer accomplish thy diuine will and pleasure. Amen* Then holding his eyes fixed on this diuine Obiect and tree of life the *Crosse*, he powred forth shewers of teares and sent forth a million of sighes; and behold he heard a voice proceeding from the *Crucifix* directed to him saying three seuerall tims, *Francis goe and repaire my house, Which as thou seest is ready to fall:* this marueilous voice did much amaze him, there being not any in the Church but himselfe, wherfore astonished and resenting the force and efficacie of these wordes, he fainted, but in fine, returning to himselfe, without delay he prepares to obey & forthwith vndertakes and attempts to repaire the materiall place wherin he had made his prayer: not yet vnderstanding how the mysticall sence of these words of God, intended the Restaura

A deuout prayer of Saint Francis.

The Crucifix speakes to Saint Francis.

tion of an other Church, Redeemed by his pretious blood, as the vnction of the *Holy Ghost* did afterwards instruct him; which since he declared to his Religious: the same was by diuine Reuelation made manifest to the Vicar of *Christ* who was *Innocent* the third then sitting in the Caire of *S. Peeter*; who retiring ouer night to his chamber, with his thoughts ouerwhelmed with a pensiue care, pondering the calamities wherwith the Church was assaulted ther was in his sleep presented before him the Church of S. I *hn Leteran* ready to fall to the ground, but a poore, abiect and contemtible man of meane Condition coming stayed the falling therof, sustaining and vpholding it, with his shoulders: the next day behold the humble *Francis* with his Brethren came and prostrated themselues at the feete of his Holines: clothed in poore and patcht garments, tendering a new & vnaccustomed *Rule*, humbly petitionating him to approue the same: the Pope beholding the seruant of God, and obserueing the integritie, puritie, and innocencie of his soule conioyned with an admirable Contempt of the world demaunding the obseruation of Euangelicall *Pouertie* with a Seraphicall feruent zeale of the saluation of soules, sayd within himselfe; truly this is the man I haue seene, who shall help to supporte the Church of God; by his workes, words, examples, and doctrine. this vision manifested the qualitie, vocation, and life of *saint Francis* and his Order;

§ *Bonau c. 3. §. 2. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1210. §. 13.*

A vision of pope Innocēt the third

S. Francis demaūdes the confirmation of his Rule.

which

which should vphold the Catholick Church, and stay the falling therof, the which he atchieued in his life time, and after him his children became the supporting pillers therof, *Salomon* doth impart vnto vs a Reuelation he had in his life, which is a true symbole hereof, if not the same: I *haue seene* saith he *a Citie besieged on all sides and reduced to so great extremity that nothing was expected but vtter destruction, now being in this affliction, not able to withstand their Enemies, when behold there was a man, founde in the Citie, who was poore and despised of all but must by himselfe: this man not withstanding poore and contemptible, was most wise and dexterous, & by his prudent aduise and counsele they founde the way to defeat the force of their Enemies, freeing the Citie from danger and setting it in all freedome and securitie.* What could haue bene more properly sayd for the glorious Patriarke S. *Francis* who like an other *Atlas*, doth support the two Poles of Christianitie. The Church in his time was *assaulted*, lamentably torne and decayed with horrible scismes: the Romane Empire was rent with dissentioon and diuisions: *Constantinople* With all *Greece* had reuolted from the Obediēce of the soueraine Bishop, the Citie of *Hierusalē* & all the *holy* Land was giuē in Prey to the *Sarazins* and Infidels; throughout all *Spaine* the Iewes and Barbarians did publickly in their Synagogues blaspheme the name of *Iesus Christ*, ouer all the Vniuers the Diuell tiranized by his adherents broching dis-

Ecclesiastes ca. 9

Bessoin a Sermon of S. Francis.

The troubles of the Church in saint Francis his time.

sentions,

sections Heresies and execrable vices: which now assembled like a squadron, menaced a totall subuersion: the Alarum was sounded through the whole Catholicke Monarchie: but none knew how to apply the remedy and redresse so great mischeifes and disasters: when most fortunatly there was founde in the same place the humble *Francis* a man abiect, and simple, little regarded of the world: making profession of *Powerty*: but in the eyes of God most wise, prudent, and holy, who by his wisdome hath taught others the way how to appease & allay those tempestous billowes and repulse those hostile insurrections to preserue the Church, and exempt it from so imminent perils restoring peace to the world, together with deuotion, Euangelicall libertie, and Religious securitie, and after his example, a multitude haue enroled and registred themselues, vnder the Ensignes of this soueraigne, Apostolicall and holy *Powerty*, recluding themselues into monasterie, arming themselues with virtue and learning, to repaire the breaches & ruines of the temple of God: reducing all to the Obedience of the Catholick Church, and laboureing in a most meritorious and edifying penitentiall life, to worke the saluatiō of their neighbours, by preachings and good example. Goe ther *Frances* and repaire my house. This poore seruant of God, better grounded in humility and contempt of him selfe: returned to *Assisium*, where receiuing many affronts and

Luc. Wadd. Appar. 1. §. 5 6 7.

S. Francis doth repare the ruin of the Church.

Digitized by Google

iniuries, both from his parents and others he began now to begge in the sight of those who before had seene him rich and opulent: and this obediently to execute what the diuine Oracle intimated vnto him, in the Church of S. *Damian*: bearing stones and other materialls on his shoulders, and so he repaired it by the helpe of the Almes & charitable beneuolence, which many moued by his vnwearied diligence and example, gaue vnto him. The like he performed in another Church of the B. Apostle S. *Peter*, to whom he was singularly deuoted, from thence he withdrew him selfe a quarter of a mile distant from *Assisium*. to a place called *Portiuncula* where there was an ancient Church of our B Lady all ruinated, otherwise entituled *Saint Marie of Angells*, (where conformable to the name were knowne to haue often bene many Angelicall apparitions and visions) through the deuotion he bore to the Angells, & especially to the Queene of Angells he laboured much in the reparation thereof, yea he made a holy resolution to establish there his dwelling, in such sorts as afterwardes it became the mother Church of the whole broadspreading and dilated Order of the *Freer Minors* being giuen vnto him by an Abbot of *saint Benedicts* Order with consent of all his Religious. Aand notwithstanding that the sayd sayd Prelate with his Religious had made him an intire donation of the said place without any obligation: neuertherles *saint Francis* as a

Chron. p. B 1. c. 6. Luc. Wadd. appar. 5 §. 8. 13 16.

S. Frãc repaires three Church

Portiuncula is the Mother Church of the Order of the Freer Minors.

louer

louer of Euangelicall *Pouertie* and a wise and prudent founder, desiring to possesse nothing with propriety and dominion in this world: but to enioy the bare vse of things: presented euery yeare a Pannier full of little fish, which he tooke in a Riuer hard by: in token of acknowledgment: which the sayd Abbott, and Religious accepted, with great reuerence and deuotion: and in exchange gaue vnto him a vessell of Oyle.

According to the opinion of the Seraphicall Doctor S. Bonauenture by the three voyces darted from the Crucifix at *Saint Damians*: and the three materiall temples, which he hath rapeired: we may vnderstand the three Orders, which he hath founded and established in the militant Church: to withdraw many soules forth of the miserable bondage of the tirant of hell to beget and consecrate them to *Iesus Christ*.

Digitized by Google

Of the institution of the order of the Freer Minors.

CHAP. II.

THis new Champion of *Iesus Christ*, *Francis* like a terrestriall Angell, or a Celestiall man: spent whole nights and dayes in prayer, in the Church of our *Ladies of Angels* beseeching her, with teares and vnspeakble groanes, to be his Aduocate, and mediatrix with God: his prayers were so forceable, that by the merits and intercession of the sacred Virgin, he was found worthy to conceiue and produce the spirit of truth, and Euangelicall *Poverty*: for vpon one of the Apostles dayes being very attentiue at masse: as they read the Ghospell, wherin our Redeemer *Iesus Christ*, prescribing the forme of the Apostolicall life, when he sent them ouer the world, to preach, saying, carry with you neither gold, nor silver, purse, nor wallet, nor two coats nor staffe nor shooes, the saint illuminated with diuine illustration, cryed out with a ioy more then naturall: this is that which I seeke, this is

that

that which the very marrow of my soule doth desire: and presently putting of his shooes, casting away his staffe and wallet, he threw away the money, which was left of the Almes, as a thing most detestable, satisfying himselfe, with one habit, laying away his leather belt, he made vse of a grosse cord, beginning to lead an Apostolicall life in imitation of the words which in the Ghospell had bene spoken vnto him, as if an Angel had brought them from heauen: this was the yeare of our Redemption one thousand two hundred and eight, in the moneth of *October* vpon the day of *S. Luke*, S. *Francis* being then 27. years of age, two yeares being expired since his conuersion: the 12. yeare of the Popedome of Innocent the third. *Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1208. § 1.2.*

In this kind of habit, this generous Captaine like an other *Seraphin* come frō the East, purifyed with the fyrie coale, kindled and inflamed with heauenly Charity: bgan to preach *voluntarie Pouerty*, Continencie, and Charity, true Pietye, and Pennance, the secure path to saluation: with simple yet forceable, graue, and seuere words which penetrated the hearts of the Auditors conuerting many sinners vnto God, teaching them the contempt & forsaking of riches, to fly vanities, the detestation of pleasures and delights, haire cloth and disciplines, lying on the ground, mortifying the flesh, passing whole nights in prayer, seruing God in fervour & deuotion, so as in short space he

became the Father of many children: who followed and imitated his example, drawne by the sweet Odour of his superemient virtues. The great increase of his Order may easily be collected, by the great number of Religious men assembled at the generall Chapter which *S. Francis* held at *Portiuncula* the yeare 1219. eleauen yeares after the institution of his Order, wherat his sincere and cordiall friend *S. Dominike*, founder of an other florishing Order in Gods Church would assist, with seauen of his Religious, there was numbred more then 5000. Brothers not counting those absent who stayed in the Conuent, to execute the ordinarie functions: and this by the assertion of *S. Bonauenture*: In the same chapter was receiued aboue fiue hundred Nouices.

Chron. p.1.B.1. ch.6

This Order hath since, so multiplyed and increased, peopling the foure corners of the world: the rising of the Sunne, hath imbraced them with her refulgent Rayes; the west hath intertained them the north hath receiued the: and the South hath afforded them mansions: there, is no corner in this Vniuers, where this holy Order hath not established monasteries, and the renowne of this great founder penetrated throughout al the Clymates of the earth: how many great Saints haue florished in this holy Order who are now inthroned in heaue: how many glorious and tryumphant Martirs, haue bathed and watered the earth with their bloud: both by Saracyns, Moores,

S. Bonauent. c. §. 10.

Henr. Sedul. iuuit. S. Francisci c. 3.

and

and Heretickes, how many learned Doctors, darting euery where the refulgent raies of their admirable doctrine, by their voyce and penne confuting Hereticks, confirming the faithfull in the faith, and conuincing the obstinate impenitence of sinners. How many illustrious persons in his Order, haue bene raised to the dignity of Ecclesiasticall Prelacie: euen to the soueraigne dignity of Papacy.

Consider good Reader how the house of God hath bene vpheld and repaired, according to the commaundement of the *Crucifix*, by the infatigable labours of his Ensigne-bearer humble *Francis* all ouer the world for to cultiuate the fertile fieldes of the Church: freeing soules from the detestable seruitude of the Diuel, consecrating them to the seruice of our great God. If thou desire to know the effects this fructifying vine hath produced foure hundred yeares since; and to consider the worthy men of this Order, the authours here cited will satisfy thy pious curiosity. See Henr. Sedul. in c. 3. vit. *S. Francisci*. Luc. Wad. in his Annals. Hieron. Plat. c. 30. 32. Gonsaga in Histo. Seraph.

But foras much as the prementioned Authors are not commonly at euery ones hand, as being written in other languages: and to the end it may more manifestly appeare, how deseruedly the style of the *Repairer* of Christs Church is agreeable and due to the Great seruant of God holy *S. Francis*, whom it pleased

S. Francis the Renewer of Christ. and the Apostolicall life

B. Sauiour to ennoble and make remarkable by the singular priuiledged Impression of his sacred woundes, the signes of our Redemption, the better to renew by him and his Order the memory of his souueraigne Passion, almost then extinguished in the hearts of Christians, and restore againe the Apostolicall life and discipline then depraued, and as it were abolished and decayed: all which doth not a little redounde to the honor of the Angelicall Virgin S. *Clare* to haue receiued her Institution & Rule of Religious life from so Grande and highly dignifyed a Patriarch as was S. *Francis:* I haue thought good here for the better satisfiing the curiosity and deuotion of the Pious Reader to insert in a distinct charecter the first chapt. which the author of the History of the 3. & 20. 1. Martyrs of the Order beatifyed by the Pope Vrban the VIII. with 3. of the societie of Iesus, all crucified in Iaponia, which the Author I say of that History (printed at DoWay) prefixed to his worke, in regard, it doth breifly and compendiously record and point out some of the most memorable and Apostolicall acts of his Order, & chiefly those enacted in these latter ages in both the East and West Indies. Wherin the Freer Minors before all other Religious haue that preheminency of glory to be inuested with the titles of their first Apostles, as will most euidently be manifested by the testimony of Hieronimus Platus the Iesuite in the ensuing chapter which foloweth

Of

and Hereticks, how many learned Doctors, darting euery where the refulgēt raies of their admirable doctrine, by their voyce and penne confuting Hereticks, confirming the faithfull in the faith, and conuincing the obstinate impenitence of sinners. How many Illustrious persons in his Order, haue beene raised to the dignity of Ecclesiastic all Prelacie, euen to the soueraigne dignity of Papacy.

Consider (good Reader) how the house of God hath beene vpheld and repaired, according to the commandement of the *Crucifix*, by the infatigable labours of his Ensigne-bearer humble *Francis*, all ouer the world, for to cultiuate the fertile fields of the Church: freeing soules from the detestable seruitude of the Diuell, consecrating them to the seruice of our great God. If thou desire to know the effects this fructifying vine hath produced foure hundred yeares since, and to consider the worthy men of this Order, the authours here cited will satisfy thy pious curiosity. See Henr. Sedul. in c. 3. S. *Francisci*. Luc. Wad. in his Annals. Hieron. Plat. c. 30. 32. Gonsagain Histo. Seraph.

And although the prementioned Authors are not commonly at euery ones hand (as being written in other languages) yet those who vnderstand them, may easily see how deseruedly the stile of Reparer of Christs Church is agreeable and due to the great seruant of God, holy Saint *Francis*, whom it

pleased

B. Francis the Renewer of Christ, and the Apostolicall life.

pleased our B. Sauiour to ennoble, and make remarkable by the singular priuiledged impression of his sacred wounds (the signes of our Redemption) the better to renew by him, and his Order, the memorie of his soueraigne Passion, almost then extinguished in the hearts of Christians, and restore againe the Apostolicall life and discipline, then depraued, and, as it were, abolished and deceased. All which doth not a little redound to the honour of the Angelicall Virgin Saint *Clare*, to haue receiued her Institution, and Rule of religious life from so grand and highly dignifyed a Patriarch, as was Saint *Francis*.

Digitized by Google

OF MANY AND ADMIRABLE ACTS wrought by the holy Order of S. Francis in the Church of God. But more especially in these latter ages, in the Indies.

THE Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* seemed by Almightie God to repaire, vphold, and propagate the holy Catholike Church (as was reuealed in a vision to Pope Innocent the third) not contenting himselfe to haue in his owne person crossed the surging and perilous seas, and trauelled ouer many barbarous and Pagá Countries, to quench the heate of his ancient zeale and there to plant and erect the triumphát standard of the holy Crosse where of in himselfe he bore the liuing Image, but euen after his death, he left to his children and followers, as their filiall patrimonie the like holy desires, which since his decease hath so enflamed their heroicke hearts, as that therein they haue carried both fire and flames, to illuminate, heate, and reforme the most blinde, colde, and schismaticall nations of the spacious world. I should digresse from my purpose of being compendious, if I should any lõger lodge my pen in these particularities: But in a word, all Italie will testifie the truth hereof, by their great and famous *Saincts*, *Antonie* and Bernar-

S Bon. in V. S. F

S. Bon. in vit. S. F.

dine, who by the maruellous effects of their diuine doctrine haue drawne so many soules out of the dangerous gulfe of this miserable world, as that Italie seemed to liue onely by their wholsome documents; they being constrained to preach out of Churches, in the publicke places and fieles by reason of the innumerable multitudes of assembled people, who were taken by the nets of these their pious predications.

Platus l.2.c.32.

One onely Father of these; to wit. *S. Iohn Capistran*, at a certaine time easting his nets into the sea of Germany drew vp at one draught, aboue twelue thousand soules, who were sunke in sinne, and fallen from the faith of our Sauiour Iesus Christ; and moreouer he caused in that Countries such a reuolt from all kinde of pride and vanitie that they brought into the opē market places, whole Carts full of fantastical headgeares, perewigs, bracelets chaines, and the like to be all burned and consumed by fire, in his presence.

Pet. Rod. l.1. hist. Serap & Chr. F. M.

Shall I goe into Greece to view the memorable acts of *Hieronymus Ejculanius*, who for the like merits, was aduanced to the Papacie, and afterward called *Nicholas* the fourth, whose life and industrie brought backe by the hand of his pious clemencie the Emperour and schismaticall Empire into the lap and bosome of the Church of Christ.

Sedul. tom. ad cit. S. Fr. c.3.

I slip ouer in silence the heroicall acts of Brother *Iohn of Monts* with his cōpanions, among

Pet. Rodulp. cit

the

the Tartarians, where they built diuers religious Conuents, in the yeare 1245.

As also the honours due to F. *Albert of Sarciano*, who like a swift and speedie cloud, did in an instant, so fertily water with his holy predications the thornes of Infidelitie, that from thence in a very short space budded the ruddie roses of holy Christianitie throughout all the Orientall parts; causing Conuents to be builded in Candia, Constantinople, Ierusalem, Syria, Greece, Ægipt, it with such fruit and promptitude, that he seemed to haue stocked the wings and naturall prey of the soaring Eagle, by assembling on such a sodden so worthie a companie of constant Christians, and reducing of all Armenia to the obedience of the Church. *Sedul. cit.*

Let vs now take a view of the Meridian Prouinces, and visit that industrious Gardiner B. *Odoric*, who merited to raise a dead man to life againe, out of an extraordinarie desire he had to baptize him, and did moreouer, so dexterously sow, plant, cultiuate, and water about the number of twentie thousand new plants of Christ, in a very short space, that they now in forme of their lillies of virginitie, in figure of the rose of martyrdome, and in fashion of the palmes of Iustice, serue him now for a Laurell of renoune and garland of glorie. *Rot. Rodulp. cit.* *Platus l. 2.*

Let vs rest our selues a while in Spaine, Catalognia, and Sardagnia, there to admire, in a time so impious and peruerse, that diuine and *Gonz. p. 4.*

wonderfull Freer Minor B. Saluator de Horta, who caused the people of those places to hasten to confession by thousands, as well by the efficacie of his speeches, as example of his vertuous and holy life: And as for wonderfull miracles, we doe not reade that the Apostles, S. *Francis*, or Iesus Christ himselfe did euer worke so many (although he could haue done farre more, and greater, if he had pleased, *Maiora horum facient*) for there was presented to Pope Paul the fift, fifteene thousand, one hundred, seauentie and eight, all passed through the hands of publicke Notaries; not counting wise as many others of lesser moment: He dyed kising the Crosse, the yeare 1564. and his holy body remaineth yet to this day both entire and maniable.

Chron. F. M. to. 4. Let vs now saile into Affrica, and there consider King Curo, much busied in soliciting the King of Spaine, about earnest affaires, sending to this effect, for Embassadour, the R. F. Francis Zirano, of this Seraphicall Order, the yeare 1603. who, in a word, being apprehended by the bloud-sucking Moores of Algiers, was sentenced to be flayed aliue, and afterwards burned. O what barbarious crueltie is this, on the one side, and what admirable constancie, on the other! Behold foure bloudy Executioners, with sparckling eyes, and foaming mouthes like rauening wolues, their sacrilegious armes lifted vp, with euery one his rasour, ready to put their vniust offices in exe-

cution

cution, the first opens his skinne, frō the neeke downe all along his shoulders, and the others drawing it in fashion of a Crosse, tares it downe his body, and then all foure tookes him by the hayre and eares, and cuts a greate Crosse vpon his head, and then they flay most inhumanly the sides, backe & forepart thereof: and afterwards with more then barbarous crueltie, they flay his tender face in like manner. O blessed martyr, art thou not yet dead? Al as no, I heare thee still to sing; *Benedicite Spiritus & anima iustorum Domino*, and make an end wholly of this Canticle, before thou rendrest thy life, whilest these wicked Mahumetans would make thee denie thy holy Faith, vexing themselues to see that by how much they rage and storme at thee, by so much the more they heare the Eccho of thine vndaunted constancie, to adde, *Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.* But peace a while O iust Abel, these impious Cains haue yet their rasors to rip open the most tender part of thy harmelesse body, to wit the nauell: to which being come, these bloudy Butchers exenterated him with such force and violence, that he had but onely leasure enough to lift vp his eyes to heauen, and say, with a loud voice, *In manus tuas Domine, commendo spiritum meum*: thus yeelding vp his soule into the hands of his Creatour. But being dead, the very winds ceased not to testifie his innocencie with such strange and vnheard of tumultuous tempests, that the cruell Moores *Psal.13.*

thought they should all haue beene slaine in the place, so that they had not leasure to burne or destroy his holy body.

P. Mart. Let vs adioyne vnto those, the glorious Father F. Danan of Valencia in the same Affrica the yeare 1533. where, for the onely faith of Iesus Christ, he was cast into burning flames, without receiuing any more hurt thereby then Dan. 3. Sydrach, Misech, and Abdenego; so that they were forced at length to put him to death by the stroke of the sword.

Iun. Ad ann. 1615. Let vs now hoyse vp saile to the vncouth Ilands, (the holy Ghost will procure vs a wind) to accompanie foure Freer Minors of France the yeare 1615. who arriuing with the French men in the Ile of Canada, celebrated there the first Masse in the famous Citie of Quebee.

P. Maria l. 4. c. 28. Chron. Bald. But that which may as much moue vs as the rest, are the heroicke deeds performed in the Ile of Moluc, by two glittering starres of the Order of Freer Minors, the one called F. Sebastian, and the other B. Antonie: the first preached there with such zeale and efficacie, that he conuerted and baptized fiue great Potentates, and going farther into the Ile Tacolande (subiect to the Mahumetans) after infinite labours, found there at length the Crowne of Martyrdome by the sword: his poore body being afterwards made a marke to shoote at in the common place of exercise, where hauing receiued a thousand shots of sharpe arrowes, was afterward cast in to the water, but could

neuer

neuer be made to sinke. Meane while, his companion B. Antonie, being faire and young, seemed so beautifull in the eyes of the Kings daughter, that shee deferred his condemnation with hopes to haue enioyed him as her husband: What doth not Satan suggest to the minds of loose and lasciuious woemen, to alienate a soule from her Creatour? But this chast Ioseph, left behinde him rather his cloake, I meane his skinne then his vowed Chastitie. But this bloudy and rauenous shee woolfe, seeing her selfe misprized by him, commanded all her Ladies and Damsels to take each of them a knife or punyard in their hands, and so daunce all in a rounde, into the middest of which shee caused to be brought this poore and innocent Religious, as naked as he was brought into the world: O prodigie! O crueltie! O vnheard of Martyrdome! The one strikes the knife into his arme, the other into his backe, another markes him on the face, another on the head, and so finally by a lingring and cruell death (by the hands of these blouddy and tyrannicall woemen) was he brought to his last gaspe, where at length they cut of his head like another S. Iohn, the great precursor of the Messias: but with this admiratiō, that his head being put vpō the top of a lōg poale, it spake miraculously & preached of those effeminate cruelties the space of two whole dayes, as if it had beene aliue, although diuiyoned frō its body. Haue you euer heard or seene *ibid.*

a more

Sap. 4. a more rare and admirable thing? O *quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate! immortalis est memoria eius*: Speake, speake then, O how faire and glittering is the chaſt generation, its memorie liues now immortall in this great Martyr, who forſooke the nuptiall pleaſures of impietie, to wed himſelfe in faith to his celeſtiall and deareſt Eſpouſe, called to the marriage of the lambe, to adhere æternally to his bliſſe and glorie.

S. Anton 3.4. tit. 24. f. 3. Let the Bulgarians riſe againe, and confeſſe that all their kingdome had beene loſt, if (about the yeare 1366. the Freer Minors, had not brought it backe againe into the sheepe fold of the holy Church of God. Would you euer beleeue that in fiftie dayes alone, they ſhould (by the ſound of eight Euangelicall trumpets onely) call into the lap of the Church, more then two hundred thouſand perſons, and make them to ſurceaſe their rebellious inſurrections againſt their king?

Plagus l. 2 de bon. ſtatu. Franc. recit. Iouin. Eſter. hiſt Mart. Gorc. Cronicq I keepe you too long to arriuing in to America, I leaue in Armenia Gonſales Saurata: among the Mides and Perſians, Paſchal & Gentil: S. Bonauenture in France, Bleſſed Pacificus, the Martyrs of Gorcome and diuers others in the low countries.

The aforementioned exploites may more then ſufficiently ſuffice to confirme that the Seraphicall Father hath left in legacie, a rich inheritance of faithfull and magnanimous children to our holy mother the Church. Yet

all these courageous Captaine seeme to haue done nothing in comparison of the admirable fruit which others of the same order haue produced, as well in the Orientall as Occidentall Indies, to the honour of God, and profit of sundry Christian Princes, but especially to the Catholike Maiestie of the King of Spaine: For in the West Indies, neuer had he that found & conquered it (to wit, Christopher Columba) obtained the graunt of his request, no, not so much as accesse to Ferdinand King of Sicilie, had not the interceſſion of the Reu. Fa. Iohn Piret bene interposed: yet for all that, ceased not the Princes and Counsellers to laugh at the hopes of Columba, seeing it was onely grounded vpon the fauour of one poore Freer Minor (as all Historians who write of the Indies haue recounted) notwithstanding, without which aduenture, and effect, what great losse, and vnspeakable damage, had the kingdome of Spaine sustained: But what was the recompence of these poore Fathers? Truly none at all, but onely the honour to accompanie the said Generall, with his brethren, & to enrich the holy Church as much with soules, as Spaine with treasures: who before had totally reiected the request of Columba, for the space of seauen yeares, vntill these Fathers tooke the matter in hand, and happily obtayned it for him: who afterwards, as well for this respect, as others, were chosen for the vantgard of so generous a conquest, about

Cornil. Ving. Ant. Mag. Hist. v. nia des Indes c. 3. Sedul. comm. vit. S. Franc. P. Marian.

the yeare 1493. where they behaued themselues so religiously, as that in the yeare 1529. one of these Brothers, called Br. Peter of Gaunt, writing to the Fathers in the low Countries, affirmed, that he alone, with his companion, had then baptized two hundred thousand Infidels: and added farther, that they had at that time about fiue hundred children vnder their tuition, whom he had so instructed in the Catholick faith, that he sent them euery Sunday to eathechise and preach in the villages, what they had learned at home in the weeke-time: And to this effect they went sometimes ten, twentie, or thirtie miles to promulge the faith of *Christ*: I leaue you to cõsider with what fruit & profit: In so much as that about three yeares after, the chiefe Bishop of one the principall Cities of the new world Mexico, wrote vnto their Generall, that he had catechized & baptized, with the assistance of his religious Brethrẽ, the true children of *S. Francis*, about ten hundred thousand persons, and a few yeares after, seauen millions, according to the report of Surius: And all this is spoken but of the Citie and kingdome of Mexico onely: a Citie that Abraham Ortelius calls the Queene of the world: And Sedulius, a faithfull Historiographer, sayes, it is gouerned by thirtie Potentates, who haue an hundred thousand men vnder their charge and command, and of whom very often, they sacrifice a thousand persons, and euery yeare there are twentie thousand

Sedul. in. Sur. ad ann. 1558.

hearts

hearts taken out of the bodies of little childrē, to be offered vnto the Deuils. For confirmation whereof, peruse the letters placed at the end of this treatise. O strange metamorphoseten, twentie, or thirtie yeares after, of a Citie, before abounding with vice and iniquitie, and of which one might iustly haue said that which S. Leo said of Rome: *Quæ erat discipula superstitionis, facta est magistra veritatis?* That which before was a disciple of new superstitions, is now made the mistriſſe of truth and veritie, yea, an Academie of so many thousand conuertants to our holy Catholike Faith. O what an happie gleaming was there made in this holy harueſt, by the labours of the poore Freer Minors! Who being not able of themselues, by reason of their smal number, to serue so many soules, cryed out for succour, and yet, not till fortie yeares after, could they obtaine the least assistance wherein, vntill, the Dominicans, Augustins, Iesuites, and others, who haue also borne apart with them in these glorious conqueſts valiantly contriumphed with them ouer the rest. But aboue all, (after the holy Church) the King of Spaine, and Blessed house of Austria, haue alwayes entrusted the most important businesses to this Order of S. *Francis* sending them to the Indies, throughout all the 28. Kingdomes that are subiect and tributarie thereunto; and likewise to the purchasing of other new found lands, sometimes as Embassadours, Inquisitors, Protectours, Bishops, and

Digitized by Google

Preachers, there to assure and enlarge his crowne and Kingdome. And to goe no farther, you haue seene it your selues in these your present times, in the peace so important and difficult, of France and Spaine, of Holland and the low Countries, which these Fathers to wit R. F. Bonau. a Calatagirone Generall of his Order for Fraunce, and the R. F. Iohn Neyen Comissary of his Order in the Low-Countries, haue bene sent to bring to effect and haue happily concluded: the benefit of which, as well Europe, as the East and West-Indies doe daily experience. *O quam pulchra sunt pedes Euangelizantium pacem!*

Yes Occidentalls, you might haue remarked in this Apostolical Freer Minor, & simple Lay-Brother by profession, B. Peter of Gant, who (besides all that I haue already spoken of him) erected, himselfe alone, more then an hundred Churches in these westerne Indies. His dexteritie in conuerting of soules was so great (labouring therein the space of fiftie yeares) that he had dispensation and graunt sent him from the Pope, and Superiours of his Order to be installed Archbishop of Mexico: But this precious pearle, desired rather to liue still in the shell of his holy humilitie, then to take vpon him so great an Ecclesiasticall dignitie, to the end, that he might thereby, to the greater misprize of himselfe, the more freely labour in the harueest of the vnmanured Indies, with the R. F. Iohn Couureur, Guardian of Gant, &

Digitized by Google

B. Iohn de Aora, who were sent thether at the very point of so difficult an assault, by Charles the fift, the yeare 1523. These ensuing verses were sent vnto B. Peter, into the Indies, by the aforesaid Emperour Charles V.

Non valet absque Petro, Cæsar, cum Cæsare Petrus.
Consolidat terris sceptra fidemque Deus!
Quam grandis Gandis! quam candida lilia pandis,
Horte voluptatis, vera cauerna Petri.
Quam magnus Petrus! Minor Atlas ille secundi
Mundi simplicibus regna ferens humeris,
Quã magnus Carolus! quasi quinta potentia Regum
Sed nisi cum Petro, non bene tantus eras.

Who's Charles the fift, if Peter's not his friend
Combinde together to the farthest end
Of th'vtmost World, the Gospels rayes shall reach
And with them Cæsars gouernement shall streach
O God! What good vnto the Gospell hath
Bene got by this Apostle of thy Faith?
O Gana! what land hast thou thy Souueraigne gaind?
In yeelding such a Columne, which sustain'd
Th'Antastycke Worlds Huge Axell, like t'another
Atlas, though but the Minorits Minor Brother:
In whom our Sauiours sacred Words proou'd true
He that is least shall be the great'st mongst you:
Cæsar was great, yet then this Cedar lesse
Which did his realme enlarge, and Gods encrease.

This said Emperour Charles V. sent thither also another firme Pillar of this new and mag-

nificent building, to Wit, F. Iohn Lumaraga, of this holy Order also, vnder the title of Protector Generall of the Indies, where he behaued himselfe so worthie his vocation, as well in person of a Preacher, as in nature of an Archbishop, that on a certaine time he wrote into these Countries, that (besides what you shall see in his letters adioyned to the end of this Historie) he had baptized ten hundred thousand persons, and broke in peeces more then twentie thousand inchanted Idols. O victorious Dauid! who canst iustly boast to haue ouercome more then ten thousand Philistins, by the onely Word of thy pious predications! O magnanimous Hercules, who by the vertue of the Croſſe, hast throwne downe and destroyed so many monstrous Idols! O inuincible Sampson, who by the power of the Gospell (as by another iaw bone) hast ouerturned the enemies of the Faith and his Catholicke Maiestie.

May you not then with very great reason (deare Reader) say vnto Charles the fift, as S. Leo said to the Citie of Rome: *Quamuis enim multis auctu victoriis, tum Imperij tui terra marique protuleris, minus tamen est, quod tibi bellicus labor subdidit, quam quod pax Christiana subiecit.* Know mighty Charles, that although thou shouldest incomparably haue enlarged thine Empire, as well by sea, as by land, triumphing ouer many worthie and victorious nations, yet in the end wouldest not thou finde, that all the la-

bours

bours of thy warlike souldiers haue euer brought so many rebellions persons vnder the obedience of thy scepter, as holy Christian peace hath subdued in the barbarous Indies, by the meanes of onely three poore and peaceable Freer Minors (as are mentioned by diuers Historiographers) to wit, B. Peter of Gant, who (as aforesaid) with his companions conuerted two hundred thousand persons to the Faith of Christ.

Two yeares after one of this order the R.F.B. Martine de Valentia, with his companions baptized twelue hundred thousand And at the same time by the most R F. Iohn Lumazaga, of this Order were also conuerted then hundred thousand more. If any one call in question the veritie hereof, let him reade the Workes of the most illustrious and R. F. Francis Gonzaguez, Bishop of Mantua, the Annals of this Order the letters from Iaponia, Sedulius. Surius, Marianus, and diuers others, who will giue him sufficient intelligence of the ineffable and miraculous harueſt reaped & procured by the aforesaid holy Fathers, which was so much the more easily effected, by how much they saw these poore children of S. *Francis* to misprize and contemne all humane commodities, and cõfirme their speeches by Working of miracles and raising of the dead.

These great Apostles deserued that their victorious triumphs, should be seconded by, other, no lesse noble and valorous Captaines!

for

Hist. Plat.

for not only the west, but East Indies also which were first found out, and subdued by that generous Colonell Vasco Gamas in the reigne of Emanuel king of Portugal; who tooke eight of these Fathers with him, to breake the yce of so difficult and dangerous an enterprise but (by Gods assistance) it prooued so fauorable and successfull vnto them, that in the yeare 1500. they sewed their fertile graine in the kingdome of Calecut, and entred into Brasile, where the first Masse was sung the 24. of Aprill, the same yeare 1500. In which Countrie were crowned three glorious Martyrs of this Order, whose warme bloud did so plentifully water this new vine of *Iesus Christ*, that the totall narration therof is impossible to be recounted. Iudge you of the plentie of the harueſt by the number of the infatigable labourers of this Order, who where therein employed. The R. F. Platus à Iesuite doth nũber in these parts (to wit the Easte Indians) thirteene Prouinces erected for the habitation of these Freers, fortie yeares before euer the Fathers of the Societie entred into those Indies. And you must vnderstand, that by the name of Prouince, the Freer Minors meane a congregation of so many Conuents vnder a Prouinciall so that one Prouince of the Order dilates it selfe sometimes into sundry kingdomes, hauing 12. 20. 30. and many times 60. Conuents each of them in their Dominions, and together with those of Religious woemen, sometimes

Hist. vniu. l. 1 c. 13.

Lib. 1. de bon. Relig. c. 30

more

more then an hundred: The Prouince alone *de Sancto Euangelio* in the West Indies, containes more then 67. Conuents of men without mentioning those of women, as Clares and those of men or women to wit, Tertiaries of both of which, there are also in both the Indies: From whence you may easily gather, how much the Order of *S. Francis* fructifieth in those quarters, and how many faithfull labourers there are in those parts, whose names to vs are not knowne, but it sufficeth that they are written more particularly in the booke of life. *S. Francis instituted 3. Orders.*

I should fill whole volumes and reduce the wide Ocean (as it were) into a shell, if I should goe about to recount all their heroicall facts, performed for the aduancement of the Faith of *Christ*, and thereunto adioyne the names of all those couragious and magnanimous souldiers, who as couragious as Iosua, feared not first to enter vnto those barbarous Countries, not yet gaue backe for all the cruelties of those terrible Gyants, the inhabitants thereof, plentifully abounding in infidelitie, siluer, and gold, that which these men (*Generatio quarentium faciem Domini*) so much abhorted, but persisted still couragious in abolishing their impietie, rendering these impious Pagans captiues to the Faith of *Christ*, and leading them in triumph, like rebels, bound to the Chariot of Christianitie, which carries them securely to their immortall glorie: and this in so great a

Theat. totius orbis & P. Marib l. 1. Chro.

number, as that all the triumphant Romanes haue not to shew so many trophees of their greatest victories, purchast by the bloud of so many thousand warlike souldiers, of their chiefest Colonels, who like vndaunted Lyons feared not boldly to present themselues before the Face of their deadliest enemies: as hath onely twelue naked and peaceable lambes of this holy Order, vnder the conduct of that great Duke, and poore Freer Minor Martin de Valentia, sent into the West Indies the yeare 1524. arm'd onely with the armour of holy Obedience, and protected with the shield of the loue of God. There was not one amongst them al that wanted courage to quell the rage of those misbeleeuing Infidels; for they had all of them as speedie wings as inflamed zeale, in this their glorious enterprize, each of them hauing conuerted and baptized the yeare 1531 more then an hundred thousand Indians. In like manner, Charles the fifth sent from all his kingdomes (and also from these quarters, to wit, from Bruges and Gand) very frequently great multitudes of Freer Minors, the particularities of whose Apostolicall acts atchieued in this holy mission, would be too tedious to recount.

Sur. cit. & Epist eiusdem Mart.

Sedu. cit

The aforesaid Charles the fift, acknowledging the honour due to the Order of *S Francis*, did not onely send those of Bruges and Gand, as aforementioned, but in the yeare 1520. hauing discouered the East-Indies also, contented

Sur. cit. & Sedul. cit.

not

not himselfe onely there to haue erected certaine significatiue Pillars of his farther trophees, engrauing thereon, PLVS VLTRA, but also sent some of those Freers thither, for markes or Pillars, to signifie vnto the inhabitants there of, that they were likewise to passe PLVS VLTRA, to wit, from their accursed infidelitie to the lauer of Christianitie, and from it to the conquest of the hauen of happinesse. Pillars truely, more shining then those which conducted Israel at midnight to the land Promise: For at the splendour of their doctrine both the king and kingdome of Mexicacan were conuerted to the Faith, the king calling himselfe Francis, in acknowledgement of the obligation which he had to the holy Order of S. *Francis*. F Iohn of Tapis, conuerted at the same time, the Quinquinists, and afterward, for his recompence, suffered a glorious Martyrdome.

Our intended breuitie in this holy Histories hath forced vs to let slip the particularities of the fortitude of F. Peter of Garobily, who spent diuers dayes in pulling downe of the prophane Idols, which were there so plentifully erected in euery place, that he brake and threw downe more then ten thousand euery day. *Chron. F Min. 1. 4.*

Likewise we must leaue the founder of the Church of Peru and Brasile, called F. Iosse de Rijcke, borne at Mechline. *Epist. fratris Iodoci. Chron. F Min. 4.*

The yeare also 1530. B Ferdinand Bassachio

was the first that taught the Indians of Cantli-tanio to sing in the Church.

P. Mari. Chron. l. 4. c. 34. I passe over the life of B. Alphonsus Ordonnez, who droue away the Deuills. And the merits of Br. Francis of the Crosse, at whose death the bells did ring of themselues, which miracle was cause of the conuersion of many Indians.

Gonz. hist. Seraph. p. 4. I leaue likewise the particular fruite produced by the Embassie of the R. F. Lewis Portugais, sent by king Narsinga, to the Viceroy of the Indies: As also of F. Denis, martyred in the Prouince of Cumana.

Gonz. ibid.

Goz. p. 3 And likewise it would be too tedious to report at large how many thousand misbeleeuers were conuerted by the feruent zeale and industrie of the R. F. B. Ximenes in new Spaine, refusing diuers Bishoppricks, for the better opportunitie of preaching to the people.

In like manner, we say nothing of the predications and martyrdomes of those who conuerted the heresies of Scibola; nor of Br. Hyacinthus of *Saint Francis*, whose bodie was found whole and entire many yeares after his death.

Chron. F. Min. Nor of F. Iames of Denmarke, who being in the Indies, had the same day a reuelation of the death of Charles the fifth, and was the first that administred the holy Eucharist in Mexicacame.

Gonz. p. 3. cit. Blessed are they who saw, and considered the zeale and holy affections of F. Iohn of S.

Michael,

Michael, and those of the Reuerend Fathers Angel of Valencia and Daniel of Italie, martyred in the Indies: and Antonie Maldonat, who like another Alexis, left his kindred, and seauen thousand fiue hundred crownes, in yearely reuenues, to goe, in nature of a poore Freer Minor to the Indies: where he might iustly say with the king of Sodome, *Da mihi animas, cætera tolle tibi*: Giue me soules, & keepe all things else vnto thy selfe. *Gen. 14*

Let vs leaue the miraculous F. Alphonsus in Peru, with F. Iohn of *S. Francis*, who being in prayer, and vttering these Blessed words, *Deus meus, illuminatio mea*, obtained, at the same instant, the gift of the Mexican tongue, and afterwards became very famous for destroying of the Idols, and recalling to the sheepfold of *Christ* those deceiued soules who long had gone astray in the fields of Infidelitie. *Chro. F. Min. 3. 4*

Peter Bernard Cosin, assisted by the Omnipotent power, retorted back againe the arrowes which were shot at him; although afterwards he was gloriously martyred, the yeare 1555. *P. Mari. in Chro. l. 3. c. 2.*

F. Iohn of Sori, in the Citie of Chaul, conserued the towne, being besieged and desparate, Almightie God hauing reuealed the victorie vnto him. *Ibid.*

F. Francis Colmenaria healed the Indians of their vlcers, by the onely sight of his letters. *R. Marian. cit. l. 2. Gonz. p. 3.*

Peter Torobio Mutolinia, which signi-

fies Poore in the Indian tongue, conuerted for his part, more then foure hundred thousand Indians.

Let vs now goe into China, and there reuiew a while, the zeale of the poore Discalsed Freers F. Peter of Alpharo, F. Iohn Baptist, & B. Francis Marian, for whose sake God did seeme to haue blinded the Centinels and Gards of the Sea-ports of China, that those holy seruants of his might safely arriue to the Citie of Canton, and afterwards to Machian, without any molestation, against all vsuall custome, for those places are ordinarily so strictly garded, that they suffer no strangers whatsoeuer, to enter there with such facilitie. Those industrious Apostles were of the Prouince of our holy Martyrs (for whom we write this Historie) and for whose honour we haue here adioyned their heroicall acts. But first before their departure from the Philippines, they there conuerted twice three hundred thousand Indians, and being enriched with so many victorious spoyles, they thence tooke their iourneyes into the Countries of China.

S. Xauier the first of the society but (not other orders) laboured much to haue an tred in to this Country but could not compasse it. Tus. in his life.

Chron. F Mon. to. 4. cit. 8. Gonz. P. Mari.

S. Didacus and his Companions, would be discontented if we should not remember them in passing by the Canaries, where they were the very first Preachers, and by words and miracles conuerted an infinite number of infidell people in that suggered Iland.

Whilest I rune ouer so many braue Apostles of the Indies, I must make you smile at the

follie

follie of the inhabitants of Cacastlane and Amaxocotlane, who are accustomed to weare, as an ornament their beard, guilded with gold, siluer or tinne: But that great Apostle R.F. Frãcis Laurence a Freer of the Seraphicall Order made them at length so detest this foolish fashion, as that they, with very great promptitude, cut of their beards, and cast them into the fire, and of the metall which proceeded there of (according to the testimonie of Bishop Gonzaguez) there were made seauenteene bells, the which weighed 141. pounds, and were afterwards put into the new Churchs. This generous souldier conuerted also the people and nations of Ortritcepa, Texogium, the Prouince called the Crowned Freers, Cacastlame, Bascamenes, and Cacolatraces, in the visit of which he was martyred with an yron barre, according as he before had propheciedI leaue you to conclude how many people he conuerted, by the multitude of beards, frõ the which was taken as much mettel as made them seauenteene belles.

It were impossible to recount all the heroicall acts which B. Martin of Iesus performed in new Spaine. P. Mariam. cit.

Of Br. Iohn Calera in the kingdome of Calixco, where he suffered a glorious martyrdome.

Of Br. Anthonie of Colart in Dissaraio, who was martyred by the Indians of Fagaloncis. P. Mariam. cit. l. 3. c. 5.

Of

Chron. F Min. t. 4

Of B. Iohn of Grenado Commissarie of new Spaine.

Ibid.

Of B. Luke of Amaldobar in Mexico, having the gift of curing diseases.

Ibid.

Of B. Iohn Bournon in Mexico.

Gonz. cit. p. 3.

Of B. Francis Soto in Mexico, who generously refused the Arch-bishoprike thereof.

Ibid. Chron. 16 Chron.

Of B. Iohn Seurade Preacher to the Quinquenists.

Of B. Francis, martyred in Moluca.

Of B. Iohn, martyred going by Sea to the Ile of Zelan.

Gonz. cit

Of B. Stephen, martyred by the Malauaries.

Chron. F Min. s. 4

Of B. Alphonsus Betanze, the first Apostle among the Castaricanes, who there baptized 4000. persons.

Ibib.

B. Francis of Torrio, in Yucatanea.

Ibid.

B. Rodericus Beneuento in the Prouince de Sancto Euangelio in Calixco, and the Vallie of Vandera.

B. Iohn Clause, in Pocye, martyred going to Xacatica: and a thousand others, which I willingly leaue out, and wittingly forget rather then by prolixity become tedious or troublesome vnto you.

Franc. Redimiuus cit.

Gonsaguez, a most pious Generall of this holy Order, makes mention of many other effects, which want of time and oportunitie will not here permit me to rehearse. But I can by no meanes suffer F. Iohn of Valeconte

to

to rest in the sad sepulcher of darke obliuion, who was sent by the King of Portugal, (and demanded by the King of Zelano) into the Indies, the yeare 1540 where for the conuersion of the King, he offered to cast himselfe into flaming fire, or into a denne of most horrible Serpents. His voyage was not in vaine, for he there conuerted the King successour to the aforesaid; the Queene his wife, the King of Candie, and almost all the kingdome of Zelano.

I haue expressely reserued for this place the merits of B. Martin of Valentia, the which exceed all narration, by reason of the greatnesse of his ardent zeale concerning the conuersion of the Indies, whither he went the yeare 1524. and receiued from God two seuerall reuelat ōs of the Countrie of China, many yeares before euer *S. Francis Xauerius* vndertooke that voyage: His life was as admirable as his death miraculous; for his body was found whole and entire full thirtie yeares after his decease, and very shortly after they found nothing at all in his shrine or coffin, no, not so much as his dust or ashes; & who knowes whither Almighty God hath raised it againe, or translated or reserued it for a more glorious shrine. His worthie acts I will here recoūt in a few verses conformable to his name.

Sedul. cit P. Maria.

Viuebat raptus Christo confixus amanti.
Viuit in hoc Christus, non erat hoc quod erat:

Talibus emerunt magnos virtutibus orbes
Meritaquam fœlix vate valente vales!
In te pertraxit tot milia, totq; phalanges,
Quot magnes acuum milia, nulla valet,
Quam validus valor hic! valet illa Valentia valde
Quam valuit validens Indica regna valens.

Grafted in Christ he liu'd, and Christ in him
For he was not the Creature he did seem,
How puissant wer't thou Mexico in this
Thy powrefull Prophet? How great was thy bliße
Enioying him? Whose worth was such, that he.
Deseru'd a Monarch in this world to be
If that a Load stone thy greatst Mountaine were,
Yet couldst not attract such store (if't were
In possibilitie) of needles, as did he
Millions of soules to Christianitie:
O more then human power Valencia thou
For them in both the worlds art sainted now.

Vpon the same:

This holy Father, for his gifts diuine
(Bleßt Martin) in our Hemisphere did shine
A glorious starre: till God, who did behold
(In's mercie) th'Indias, which in darkenesse howl'd
Sent streight to dißpate their clowds, this Sunne
Who first in Mexico his course begunne.
And there did set, yet first did worke so much,
That th'Indian equaliz'd the Roman Church,
Whose fervent Zeale could not at all be'co'lde
By frozen want, or miserie controlde,

No

No tyrannie could close vp his mellifluous lipps
Nor interposing Barbarisme eclipse
His Faiths cleare beames. This glorious Palme the more
It was suppresst, the loftier did sore:
Or like a Torrent stopt, the swifter ran
Till he arrived in the Ocean
Of Gods large mercie, with the soules which he
Embarked had for Christianitie
A Wealthyer Carracke nere to th'Indies went
Nor greater treasure since from thence was sent
For he enrich'd their Minds and Mines with Ore
Which were but leade and Copper both before.

O Wonderfull prouidence of Almightie God! that this bright Sunne-beame Martin, should be sent to illuminate a new world, Farre greater then that which Martin Luther had (seauen yeares before, disasterously blinded by an obscure cloud of darksome Heresie, raised in Germanie. For, in the kingdome of Mexico alone, were numbred so many Christians, that the Chronologer Amandus Zitritikeus affirmed, that *Fere cum Ecclesia Latina comparari possit Ecclesia illa Indica*. One might then almost compare the Indian Church with that of the Latin. This holy Father was of the Prouince of S. Gabriel, where he knew by reuelation, that the Childrē of that Prouince should profit much in the conuersion of the Indians; the which prophecie is now totally accomplished in those our holy Martyrs: For whose sake we write this Historie. For from out of

the Prouince of S. Gabriel was founded that of S. Ioseph, from whence these our poore discalsed Martyrs tooke their iourney towards the Indies: where it seemes that by Almightie God, the Catholicke Church, and the Christian Kings were all Apostolically bent: and in this exploite imitated that potent Monarch Alexander the Great, who stripping naked those choise souldiers whom he had expressely selected for the conquest of the world, said, that by how much they were poore and naked exteriouly, by so much more would they be animated to fight couragiously to obtaine despoiles of their enemies, and lesse enuied of their foes. This was the reason that the poore (in transitory riches but in Charity abounding) Order of S. *Francis* was honoured with the first onset of this generous assault, to be vndertaken against a new world, the Indies: Hauing therefore, to this purpose crossed the turbulent Seas with the first armes of the King of Portugal and Spaine, they did there most Apostolically Euangelize the holy Gospell of *Iesus Christ*, as well in nature of Preachers, Pastors, Bishops, Archbishops, and Apostolicall Legats, as in qualitie of trustie Embassadours from Kings and Emperours, yea, from the very Infidells themselues, and their whole kingdome, planting therein the triumphant tree of the holy Crosse, the which since hath so budded, and shot forth its sacred branches (watered with the bloud of their bodies and sweate of their browes)

Chron. F Min. t. 4

that

that they haue there engrafted both Palmes and Bayes, whereof to wreath illustrious Laurels, and glorious garlands for triumphant Martyrs: Which as they all first budded and sprung from the precious bloud of our Sauiour *Iesus-Christ*, so the children of S. *Francis* from the bloud of their Seraphicall Father, in such manner conioyned to that of *Iesus Christ*, that (although in Valētia it be farre vnequall) yet at least it doth so helpe forward the effect, as that it animates the Children thereof to the same generous encounter like as the warlike Elephant is as much encouraged at the sight of the bloud of a simple and common souldier, as of a great and valiant Captaine. Would you euer beleiue that the bloud of S. *Frances* his Stigmats hath some participation with that of *Iesus-Christ*? Howbeit his bloud was shed by the rage of his enemies, but this of S. *Frances* by the hand of *Iesus-Christ* himselfe. Yes truely, our Lord opened his side (like to that of Adam) to ingrafte a fertile generation of holy Martyrs. A little before the deaths of these holy Martyrs, an Image of S. *Francis* was seene by them in the Citie of Meaco, miraculously all running with bloud, signifying their cruell and blouddy deaths, which should water the Countrie of Iaponia, in such aboundant māner, as that the people of all those Isles were in the end both wholly and happily fortunate, by the totall conuersion of all those who were sōmoned, by thē, into the Comt of the Church

of God. Thus farre out of the forefaid Author.

But of those acts in the Indians or of those of these latter ages performed by thē for your fuller content in all particulars, you may peruse Charles Rapineus his history of the Apostolicall acts atchieued by the FF. Minors in East and West Indies compiled in 10. bookes also the History of the 23, Protomartyrs of Iaponia of the Order of S. *Francis*, see also the History of the conuersion of the new Mexico a most spatious country containing many Prouinces, and Territoryes founde out & cōuerted by the Freer Minors of S. *Francis*: this History is in diuers lāguages within these 3. yeares to wit Spanish, French, and Latine, see also Marianus his Franciscus Rediuiuus or S. *Francis* Reuiued: also D. Estius his History of the Gorchom Martyrs, Thom. Buchier his Ecclesiasticall history of the Freers Martyred in England, Scotlād, & Irelād, also a booke intituled *Lucerna Fidei accensa per Fratres Minores in Palatinatu & alijs Prouincijs Germaniæ* wherin by the testimonies and letters of the Emperour, Duke of Bauariæ, Lords, and Magistrats of diuers territories Cities, townes, and villages (before these last warres) is declared that the Freer Minors conuerted those teritoryes, Cityes, Townes and Villages and therfore reprehends some that would enter in to their haruest, to reape glory where they neuer had sowne, for this is particular to this Order that alwayes it addicted it selfe rather to acte and doe, then

Authors that haue recorded the memorable acts of the FF. in those latenages

to

to depredicate their owne actions in writing, no wayes placing there glory in the mouths of men yea hiding oftentimes that which is necessary, of which the Psalmist speakes when he sayd O Lord silence not my prayse for that the mouth of the deceitfull is opened against me. Psal. 61

It is not my purpose to declare that after S. Francis had vnderstood by the reuelations made to S. Clare and B. Silueſter that his vocation was not only to contemplate but by exãple & doctrine to benefit his neighbour he forthwith went to preach & parting his 8. religious (which then he only had) in forme of a crosse he sent them ouer the 4. quarters of the world where they fructified so much as that when by the Saints desire they miraculously assembled to the Chapter there were present 5000. whẽce you may gather how much the præmẽtioned 8. proffited, and how many were extracted out of the diuels iawes, since that so many were conuerted to this pœnitentiall and Apostolicall Order. c. 18. Chron. l. c. 10. S. Bon. l. 4. in V. S. Fr.

In the expedition of this Chapter S. Francis desirous in a more particular manner to renew the birth of all mankind, departed all the Christian and Pagan Coũtries, of the world to his brethren, whose merites, seruices, and labours for the exaltation of gods Church, how many & how great they were I remit you to the R. & renowned F. Fa. Luke Waddings Annales, where not only those, but also infinite other labours Chro. 1. part. Pisanus lib. de Conform fruct. 10 & 24.

Digitized by Google

bours and deserts of their you may finde registred. In the expedition of the aforesayd Chapter the Saracens fell to S. *Francis*, wither he repaired with his companions and coming thither he made the Great Soldan of a Lyō & a woolfe (who would haue giuen before to any that should bring a Christians head a great recompence) a meeke lambe graunting licence to him and his Companions to preach the Gospell in his Dominions, desiring the Saint to pray for him, which he did for as S. Antonine of Florence reports he was baptized by his religious after the Saints departure, of whō God hauing ordained that he should not only be a light to the Gentiles but also renew his life and the memory of his passion in the hearts of the faithfull, he returned into Europe where in Italy vpon Mounte Aluerne on the feast of the Exaltation of the Crosse, it pleased our B. Sauiour to make him remarkable by the impression of his sacred wounds, which with excessiue paine for 2 yeares till his death he bore visibly in his body, but omitting those *Magnalia Dei* as not able nor worthy to depredicate them. It shall suffice me, to exhibite in a trāsitory view some generall notions of this Order, selected out of the Chronographicall Table which *Vitalis de Algezira* by the approbation of Malderus Bishop of Antwerpe published 1626.

Chr. 1. p.

In this there are reckoned 27. Canonized Saints which is much both for the time of the Order, and also for the difficulty of Cannoni

zation

zation which not lõg before S. *Francis* his time was vsed with such streight and rigorous examination: but before the Bishops, and Prelats, of the places approbatiõ of their sãctity sufficed. Of beatified 606. & of Confessours renowned for Sanctity and Miracles 1650. but what doth he say 1650. since according to the allegation of Rappeneus. The Prince of the Canonists D. Nauarre, and S. Vincent the ornament of the Dominicans, *affirme that there neede no miracles to canonize the professours of the Rule of the Freer* Minors, *who by the sole obseruance of their Rule may without feare* (say they) *be published for Saintes, in so much as a* Pope *did say if he did canonize those which were saintes of this* Order, *it was behoofull he should register in the role of* SS. *all those which remained in the Obseruance of their profession, and that the See Apostolique would haue employment enough therin only, and that there would not be sufficient dayes in the yeare to giue euery one his due honour apart.* To wit so great is the perfection of this Euangelicall Rule dictated to S. *Francis* by *Christ Iesus* Master of perfection, as it not only placeth his Obseruers assuredly in heauẽ, but it also eleuates them to a most eminent degree of glory: as the testimony of our all-Immaculate Virgin our B. Lady to Robert Maidston, Bishop of Hereforde (related by Wadding) confirmes: for as you may reade in that Author when our Lady had shewne him in a vision all the mansions of glory correspondent to euery ones state, at last

Rap in. in the beging of his Chron.

Note

1. Tom. Annal. Christ louteth the Freers particularly.

shee shewed him the F. Minors immediatly vnder his sonne telling him *that Christ loued them more then anay other, for that they had perfectly imitated his life*, And with all exhorted him for the greater security of his saluation to make himselfe a member of that Order, which he did afterwards relinquishing his Bishopprike, as also did many other grand personages in that kingdome as namely Cloptome Lord cheife Iustice of England, the Lord Lile, the Lord Abot of Abington, the Abot of Osne. in a word, not only seculars but also religious namely Benedictines, Augustines, yea and Carthusians (as the Ecclesiasticall history of England witnesseth,) flowed vnto it: so great was the estimatiō of this Order there, and so perfect a conformitie it was iudged to haue with Christ and the Apostles life, the paterne and Rule of discerning the eminency in perfection: as that F. Minors there were styled and called for many yeares by the name of the Order of the Apostles. Of Martyrs he numbers 9 vo. although indeed they are innumerable: Abot Ioachim with a Propheticall spirit foretold many things of S. Dominike and S. Francis, as also of their Orders: speaking of the FF. Minors and recounting a many Countries they should passe in to, at last sayeth that a great part of them should goe to heauen by Martyrdome and indeed it is a thing so proper and frequent to this Order as that when S. Francis (though he passed to the Saracens Country to that end,

Harfild. in vita Io. Peccham. Freers in England called the Order of the Apostles. Wadd. tom. 1. martirs apud Wadingum tom. 1.

howbeit

howbeit God ordained for him a farre more glorious Martyrdome to wit to beare the sacred and dolorous wounds of *Iesus Christ*) whē he heard the newes of some of his Brothers mission ized to Moroco to haue bene put to death, he sayd he thanked God that now he had 5 true F. Minors, and it is a condition proposed publikly to those that will professe this Rule, that it occasiō presēts it selfe, whither they would be ready to vndergoe Martyrdome or no? to which if they answere affirmatiuely the Superior giues him his professiō. Whēce it is nowōder if at the breach with the Apostolical See made by King Henry the 8. that not one, but all the obseruant Freer Minors in England (*Omnes ad vnum* saith *Alanus Copus ana Surius*) were persecuted, and as D. Sanders relates were all put out of their Monasteries before the least persecution was raised against any other Orders: and at one time about 200. were in London prisons when as by all humble supplications, efficacious and conuincent arguments they could not peaceably maintaine the vniō of England with the Church of Rome, and regaine the King whom they so honoured, and whom the King before his reuolt (moued by the example of his Father Henry the 7. who for his singular deuotion to the Order builded and erected for them 6. Monasteries) as that he elected them to be the spirituall directors and Ghostly Fathers both to himselfe & his Queene Margaret of the 3. Order of S. *Francis* from

Chronicon. 1.

Surius in Cōm. de rebus in orbe gestis Sanders lib. de schism. Anglica Stephanus Boronius Was Henry the 8. Ghostly Father an F. Iohn Forest martyred and sanctified w. the Queene

whom he would haue bene diuorced: which designe, when by the prementioned meanes the Freers could not hinder, complying with their obligations towards God in so necessary a cause, publickly in their sermons impugned it, as also those who for worldly ends adulatoriously smoothed vp the King in his pretēce: for which cause King Henry the 8 put so many of them to death, partly publickly, partly by poisoning them and smothering them with the lothsome filth in the dungeons in as that hauing considered well their candide and pure good intentions towards him, and also the grounded motiues on which they founded thē selues: ingeniously confessed at the houre of his death that his proceedings towards the Franciscans, more greiued him then all that he had done against other Orders, as witnesseth Thomas Bouchier (sometimes in great grace with Queene Elizabeth) in his Ecclesiasticall Historyof those Martyrs passions.

Sanders li. de Sym. Angl. The multitude of English martyrs. Henr. 8. more sorres for his persecution against the Freer then any others the Bouchier.

Of those whose worth and merites hath aduanced to Ecclesiasticall prelacy: 6. Popes, 12. Patriarkes, 57. Cardinals, 128. Archbishops, 590. Bishops. Hieronimus Romanus affirmes that there are not 4. bishoppriks in all the dominions of Spaine which hath not had a Freer for their Bishop. Yea as I am credibly informed by a man of quality, one Cōuent of Salamanca in Spaine within these 3. yeares hath afforded 8 Freers which I say within these 3. yeares were all actually Bishops.

The Ecclesiasts. call Prelats the Order hath afforded the Church.

Of

Of Apostolicall Legats and kings Embassadours for to negotiate Ecclesiasticall affaires for the Churches conseruation and exaltation, are numbred 270.

Great persons rather illustrated by the Order then they ennoble it

Of great personages which haue adorned this Order or rather hath bene adorned by its eminency: as well to this purpose saith the most illustrious Cardinall Treio in his Epistle: prefixed to *S. Francis* his Works. Where hauing vttered many rare and excellent things of S. Francis: & his 3. Order: in the end he say th: What need many words? is not the gray or ashcolour habit of *S. Francis* truly purple wherwith either regall or Cardinall Excellency may be adorned? that is truly purple which Christs bloude hath signed and the beleife of his passiō hath dyed, & which insteed of *Christ* S. *Francis* with his owne bloud flowing from his sacred wound hath scarlefied and died red? is the humility of Christ, seruitude? &c. of such grand persons I say are counted 2. Emperours 4 Empresses, 20. Kings, amongst whom was King Iohn of Armenia who was Soueraigne maister to 24. crowned Kings vnder him of whom the Poet Sang

Armenia Wonders at their King of Royall seede
Casting downes sceptre and cladin S. Francis weede.

Of Queens 20. the sonnes and daughters of Kings 55. 1. Archiduke, 7. Princes, 20. Dukes, 34. Marquisses, of Counts 85. of Archidu-

cheſſes 1. of Princeſſes 7. of Ducheſſes 46. Marquiſſes 26. Counteſſes, 32. Sonnes and daughters of ſuch Nobles 368. of Inquiſitors which conſerues Religion, and repreſſeth the licentious liberty of Hereticks broaching new paradoxicall and damnable opinions are rekoned 84. without counting thoſe which are Ordinarily from the yeare 1258. at Spoleto, Fulginia Reate, Florence, Venice, Ragutio, Iſtriæ, Boſnæ and Dalmatia. Of famous writers in diuers ſciences, which haue bene burning lamps of wiſdome extending their luſtre ouer the whole world, more then 880. amongſt whom where the three foũders of Schoole Diuinity, and that to the Singular glory of our Nation all English men, namely Alexander Hales General of the Realiſts, and Maſter vnto S. *Bonaventure* and S. *Thomas* of Aquine; both branches of his schoole, 2. Iohn Dunſcot Author of the Formaliſts 3. William Ocham Prince of the Nominals ſchoole, Whoſe merits and commẽdations are to be prized according to the vnſpeakable benefit of diuinity brought to that Methode and perfection by them which all Prelats & Paſtours yea the Whole Church doe abundantly experience.

Inquiſitors.

Famous Doctors.

The Foũders of Schole diuinity Engliſh.

The great compaſſe and extent of the Order cõprifeth 181. Prouinces. 31. Vicaries, ſchooles in the Indies to teach not boyes only but alſo men and boyes, and that not Grammer for (which there are Pedagogs enough euery where) but Chriſtian Doctrine, in which they Imitate

The greatneſſe of the Order

Chriſt

Christ and his Apostles who are neuer reade to haue taught boyes Grammer: The disciple is perfect if he imitate his Master and according to our Master *Christ Iesus* the disciple is not aboue the Master. Of Conuents their are numbred 9336 of Religious of this order (omitting the Tertiaries of S. *Francis* which are innumerable) the last Generall chapter at Rome Ano. 1625. euery Prouinciall giuing vp the number of the Br. & Fat which were in their Prou.) there were nūbred 18 3793. In so much that in the time of Calixte the 3 Pope of that name 1455. in the raigne of Fredericke the 4. The Generall obliged himselfe to giue the 30000. Freers if they would make holy warre against the Infidels and Pagās maintaining the Quires with as many more &c. *Exhuius Ordinis Sodalitio* Saith Roderiquez *viri per celebres exorti sunt, qui & sanctitate, & vitæ integritate cum doctrinæ excellentia coruscarunt: ita vt nulla vel frequentior, vel amplior monastica professio ipsis Minoribus in Ecclesia habeatur*, Seldome *saith M. Antonius Coccius Sabellicus* and I know not whether euer I spoke more true, no Order or institute of humaine pietie, euer had so great a propagation as this one family which hath filled & Possessed the whole world: yea saith that great Glory of the Dominicans Granada *Tantum abfuit vt a Beato Francisco institutus ordo inopia cogente defecerit* (Note the sequel) *vt ob hoc ipsum supra omnes alios Ordines auctus ac dilatatus fuerit, &c. Hinc factum est vt vnicus Beatissimi Patris Francisci Ordo*

Roderiquez. t. 1 Vbi sup.

No Order so much amplified as F. Min. Enn. 9. li. which Con. 2. de S. Fr. According to Granado S. Fr Order

hath more houſes then all the other Orders togeather.

do plura fortaſſe inter ſe cœnobia, quam reliquæ omnes omnium aliorum Ordinum continent. We may therfore pioufly beleeue that God almighty whoſe conuerſation is with thoſe that are ſimple, gaue the like benedictiõ to the Patriarke S. *Francis* for his doues innocency as he gaue vnto the Patriarke Iacob for his gratefull ſimplicity (*Gen.* 25.) Iacob was a ſimple man and dwelt in the tabernacles to whom (*Gen.* 28.) God conferred this bleſſing ſaying *thou ſhalt be dilated and ſpread from East to weſt, from North to South and all the Tribes of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed in thy ſeede, and I will alwayes be with you wherſoeuer you ſhall walke.* And indeed God could not but be with him that hath peopled heauen with Saints, not only by the multitude of the Profeſſours of his Order, but alſo of others in all Parts of the world, by the induſtrious labour of him & his childrẽ plucked forth out of the iawes of the infernall deuouring Dragõ and conſecrated and wholy dedicated to God, ſo that in his ſeed all tribes vpõ the face of the Earth hath bene bleſſed and made happy: and as it may be ſayd of S. *Francis* (whom ſome termes the Second precurſor of Chriſts 2. coming to wit the day of Iudgment) *there was a man ſent from God whoſe name was Iohn* (ſo S. *Francis* his name in Baptiſme was Iohn, though afterwards changed not without miſterie) by whõ I meane by himſelfe and his Order all. Nations ſhould beleeue & be taught, ſo likewiſe with out offẽce may be ſayd of the Order

S. Frãcis ſeemes to haue Iacob benediction.

(of him

(of him who had as many conformityes with Christ, as was possible for a creature with his Creator) that which is sayd of Christs Church for the manifold grace therin *Quosdam dedit Apostolos quosdam Prophetas*, &c. to wit, there *Stood a Queene at his right hand in a vestiment of gold, compassed with variety*, so that it may be applied not vnfitly to this Order that shee is *Christ Iesus* the King of Kings his poore Dame and Espouse, compassed *With the variety* of Martyrs, Doctors, Confessors, and Apostolicall men &c. as also by the multiplicity of families, to wit Conuentuales, Observantines, and Capucines, *inuested with gold*, that is with ardent Charity, for the abondance of which towards God & their neighbour so effectually demonstrated, this Order by the Church is inuested with the title of *Seraphicall*: and though all Orders haue their proper Ornaments and multiplication according to that (24. *of Num.*) *Pulchra sunt omnia tabernacula Iacob quæ fixit Deus quasi Cedros prope aquas*, for God is the founder of all religious Orders *ipse fundauit & multiplicauit eos*, &c. Yet by the way of excellency saith Rodericquez the Church singeth of no other Order, that which it singeth of *S. Francis* to wit *Deus qui Ecclesiam tuam Beatus Franciscus merito fœtu nouæ prolis amplificas* &c. For not onely in the beginning it spread it selfe, & produced worthy persons and pillars of the Church, but as *Hieronymus Platus* the Iesuite saith *not only that Age wherein this Order sprung*

Psalm. 44.

F. Minors ſtyled by the Church the Seraphicall Order.

All Orders haue their proper Excellency.

Ezec. 37.

Platus. l. 2. c. 30.

vp, Was wonderfully enlightned and holpen by it, but it hath euer strengthned and vpheld the Church of God these 376. yeares which it hath continued since the first beginning, & indeed if wee consider impartially what this Order hath done in the Indies, in the Conuersion of Gentiles, in the conseruation of the holy Land & the sepulcher of our B. Sauiour, wherof they only are Guardians and keepers, with many labours and the spilling of much bloud in the Turks Countryes, as also the great oppositiō they haue made against the Churchs enemies, not only by writings but also with the losse of their liues, in France, the low Countryes, Germany, England, Scotland and Ireland &c. you will affirme with Grauinus the Dominican a Doctor in Diuinitie that *S: Francis* his Order doth as much now flourish in her old age as shee did in her youth and first feruour. & here by the way, I cā not but greatly admire the wisdome of Gods prouidence that as Martin, Luther by preaching all carnall liberty and impugning all mortifications of the body and humiliations of our selfes, peruerted many weake soules: so did he raise vp an other Martin, to wit, de Valētia of the family of the F. Minors Recollects of *S. Frācis*, who about the same time by diuine prouidence superadded vnto the Rule many streight and austere Cōstitutiōs of life, by which they conserued, conuerted and regained more soules to God, then the Heretikes by their licentious Gospel liberty (as

the Freer keeps the holy lād and sepulcher of Christ.

they

they tearme it) peruerted and withdrew. So this Order alwayes enlargeth ſtrẽgtneth & ſupporteth Gods Church by the Exãple of S. *Francis* their Generall, of whom the Ornament of Cardinales Baronius, Depoſeth in this mãner (God compationating the miſeries of this lamentable world, and fully decreeing to repaire and vphold his Church declining worſe and worſe, and euen falling by the depraued diſcipline of mãners, Framed in the fornace of the holy Ghoſt, this Apoſtolicall mã Frãcis, as a new ſtarre to diſſipate the darke cloudes of ſinne and error,) Whence Hen: ab Vrimar an Auguſtine Saith that S. *Francis* had three beames by which he illuminated the whole world &c. & that of him is verified that which is written in *Ecc.* 43. *Tripliciter ſol exurens montes radios igneos, exuſtians & refulgens.* For ſaith he, by the beame of Doctrine, he diſpelled ignorance, by the beame of Example he banished negligence from the Tepide and ſhouggish: and by the beame of Miracles, he vanquiſhed obſtinacy and obduracy. Wherfore ſince this Order is ſo fertile a ſoile & hath ſuch an excellẽt ſeedmã as was S. *Francis* with what temerity can any one either directly or indirectly villifye this ſtate, or detract from the profeſſors thereof eſpecialy ſince (as *Nicholas* III. Pope pronounceth.) *They are the profeſſors of that holy Rule Which is founded in the Euangelicall Worde, authenticated by the Example of Chriſts life, and ratified by the ſpeeches and actes of the Apoſtles, foun-*

Serm. 3. de S. Francis.

6. decre. de verb. ſig. exiſt. qui. &c. Pope Nicholas his Commendation of the Rule and Order.

The impression of the stigmats is the seal of Gods approbatiõ of the Order.

dations of the militant Church. That is it with God (how soeuer Carnall libertines esteeme therof) *a pure and Immaculat Religion, which descending from the Father of light, deliuered verbally and exemplary to the Apostles by the Sonne, and finally by the holy Ghost, inspired and reuealed to S. Francis and his followers: hath the testimoniall of the Whole Trinity, and that it is that which by the attestatiõ of S. Paul No man hereafter ought to molest* (to wit by malice or persecutiõ) *seeing Christ by the Stigmats of his passion hath confirmed it, in making its Institutor remarkable by the signets his passion*, The impressiõ of which stigmats called by *Bellarmine signum omnium maximum ac singulare & quasi prodigium omnium prodigiorum*, The Church highly honours with an anniuersary solemnity. By this (Pious Reader) you may easily collect how great a Fauorite of God S. *Clares* Instructor was, pointed vndoubtedly out by S *Iohn* in his Apocalips (as most euidently demonstrats Vicounte Montague of pious memory in his Epistle prefixed to his Translation of *saint Frances* his life) whē he said *I saw an other Angel* (to wit S. *Francis* an Angelicall man for the eminency of his vertues) *ascending from the rising of the sonne* (to wit like an other morning sonne continually waxing more resplendent, illuminating by himselfe and his followers the whole vniuerse) *hauing the signe or image of the liuing God* (to wit, for so great a conformity as was compatible with the limitatiõ of a Creature to his Redemer *Iesus Christ* (as wel

demonstrates'

Digitized by Google

demõstrates Bart. Pisan. in a whole booke of that argumẽt) wee may also see how due to S. Fráces as was sayd in the begi ig, is the title of *Repairer of Gods Church*. All which *Gregor. 9.* to æternalize and perpetuate the memory of the S. hath confirmed by a Funerall monumẽt on S. *Francis* his sepulcher, which I wil here subscribe as a finall clause: if first I satisfie the interrogatory which some make, to wit, how could S. *Francis* and his Order be such great pillars of Gods Church, when they seeme to be simple and poore, hauing neither riches, wealth, nor power? Gravin⁹ the Dominican *in 2. parte* of his *Vox Turturis c. 24. an.* Wereth well this questiõ whẽ he saith, that among other Miracles God hath wrought: that is most eminent, that he subdued the world and the wisdome therof by a few simple men, so by the *Freer Minors*, he confoundes the vanity and pompe of the world *Consider* (saith he out of S. *Paul*) *not many powerfull, or noble according to the flesh, but God chose the weake of the world to confound the strong: and the ignoble and contemptible, and the things which are not, to destroy the things which are*: for which S. *Paule* giues this reason *that all flesh may not Glory*, attributing to humain forces which is to be giuẽ to God. And indeed God is not changed in the course by which he now conuerted the New World America then anciently he did the Olde, as well obserueth *Plarus à Candida Author* of the Iesuits l. 2. c. 30. Who in the same worke, sayes that the Franciscãs not only pro-

moted the finding out of it, but were the first Conuerters of it, whom also in the same chapter he affirmes, to haue bene the first of the East Indies also. To speake much in a few words, saies Gonsaga Bishop of Mantua *what soeuer labours in the East Indies for 40. continuall yeares either in Curing the infirme, or in conuerting the Infidels, or in instructing the Cathecumists, or cultiuating the reconciled, either in the administration of the Sacraments or in the exercise of other Charitable works that all lay vpon the shouldiers of the Franciscans* (*Hist. Seraph. p. 4.*) so that the iyce was broken by them *dimidium facti qui bene cœpit, habet.* Which also is farther confirmed out of Turseline the Iesuite *l. 2. vita S. Xauer. Nulli quippe in tota India tunc erant religiosi, præter eos quos dixi Franciscanos qui Christiana res nauabant operam.* And by the way to omit how these Iesuites are to be accorded, for Platus lets into the East Indies the Dominicans, and Augustines before the Iesuites, which Turseline denies, saying that there were none in all the Indies but Franciscãs before S. *Xauerius* his Arriuall, to omit this I say you must note by the way that when Iesuites writes vnder S. *Xauier* his picture as any other where *Apostolus Indiarum &c.* or *Effigies B. Xauerij qui primus è Societate fidem in Indiam inuexit.* You must know they doe not vnderstand, that he was the first Conuerter of them, or that he was first absolutely of all Orders that carried the light of the Gospel into those partes, no but

Turselinus in S Xauer. vitæ l. 2.

that

Digitized by Google

'hat among many of the Society, that haue laboured there, he was the first Iesuite, and therfore with relation to themselues he may be sayd the first, which is spoken least any should thinke that they (Who direct all *ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*) may not be thought to arrogate falsly, or æquiuocally that which *in Domino* others may glorie for, seeing therfore *non est fastenda via* according to S. Austine *in verbis, vbi constat de intentione*; and it is manifest according to the testimonies of Platus and Turseline both of the Society of the most holy name of Iesus: that the Frãciscans were Gods first instruments in the conuersion of the Indians, none ought to taske them of any iniury, they neither intended or haue done, in such or the like writings. God therfore vnchangeable in the course for the cõuerting the new & old world as he chose the Apostles poore and simple men, for the first conuersion of the old World, so for the first subduing the new world to the yoke of Christ he elected the F. Minors men of an innocent simplicity and destitute of all humane power, *Confiteor tibi Pater Domine cœli & terræ, quia abscondisti hæc à sapientibus & prudẽtibus* (opinione propria) *& reuelasti ea parunlis* (rebus tẽporalibus vel sensu malitiæ:) The second reason why the Freers state is so proper to fructifie, is drawne out of S. Chrisostome and it reflecteth vpon the men that are to be holpen who are more moued by exãple of life then words alone. And here we speake

not

not of what may be, but what is more forcible to perſwade and winne peoples hearts. For who can make any doubt, but that people will eaſier beleeue that a man ſets all humane things at naught, if they ſee him indeed contemne them, then if outwardly they ſee no ſuch thing by him, though inwardly in his minde he be ſo diſpoſed, which men can not know becauſe they can not diue into the ſecrets of our hearts? but let vs heare what the Golden ſpoken Father S. Chriſoſtome ſpeakes to this purpoſe *Hom. 46. in Matth.* If twelue men, *ſaith he*, were able to conuert the whole world, think with yourſe'ues, how great our wickednes is, who cannot reforme our owne ſubiects, being ſo manie of vs, that we might ſuffiſe for ten or eleuen thouſand worlds. You will ſay, the Apoſtles wrought miracles. But it was not their miracles, which made them ſo much admired. For many ſinners did caſt out Diuels, and wrought no ſuch effects, but were punished. What was it then which made them ſo great? the contempt of money, the deſpiſing of honour, the abſtaining from all buſineſſes of this life; if they had not had theſe things, though they had raiſed the dead, they would not only not haue holpen any bodie, but bene eſteemed ſeducers. Thus farre S. Iohn Chryſoſtome moſt properly to the commendation of the F. Minors, who as they are moſt eminent in the vow of Obedience as promiſing particularly to Obey the Pope, and their ſuperiorus

Note wel.

in

inal things which are not sinnefull & against their Rule, so doe they surpasse in powerty, not only relinquishing dominion and propriety in particular as all other Orders doe, but making a perfect renunciation in common also, contenting them selues with the bare vse of things with out any propriety. And this to the end that being wholy abstracted from errene affaires they the more strictly be vnited with God and haue their conuersation in heauen, as also for the loue of their neighbour, abandoning all dominion that they may haue no ianglings or law suites with them, remouing all occasions which may effect any breach of charity, with grounde being laid in them selues. Tell me I pray can any man better exhorte an other to the loue of God, then they that haue giuen so euident testimony therof by relinquishing all for his sake? can any one better incite one to the obeissance of the supreme Pastor and other Prelats, then a F. Minor who without President before them hath particularly obliged himselfe thereunto by a fourth vow? Can any more forceably persuade one to imitate the powerty of Christ (who saith though, the birds haue their nests and foxes their dennes yet the sonne of man hath not wherwith all to shelter himselfe) then a F. Minor who appropriates neither houses or any thing at all, much lesse seekes after wealth and riches, who is this? tell me who is this? and wee will extolle him to the heauens for he

Bellar.

hath done wonders in his life. And this admirable contempt of riches seemed so strange to the Indians, as it was a singular motiue of their conuersion as hath bene said in the aforegoing chapter. Who is he that can better incite one to the austerites and mortifications of the body, that according to S. Paul the life of Christ may be manifested in vs: then the F. Minors that are cladde in sakloth or poore contemptible habits, naked in there feet, hard in their lodging, in their diet auster, often fasting and praying night and day? Who can better propose vnto their Auditorie, the Humility of *Christ Iesus* then F. Minors, which in an eminent degree voluntarly misprize, and humble themselues, whence Innocent the 4. writing to the Bulgarian king telles him that before all other he hath made choyse of F. Minors for that he iudged, they would be more beneficiall to him, in regard they were followers and imitators of Christs humility, In a word who can more effectually preach any euangelicall Precept or Counsel either for the purchase of virtue or extirpation of vice then whose profession and life is to obserue the Gospel? but such are the F. Minors *Regula & vita Minorũ Fratrũ hæc est scil. Domini nostri Iesu Christi Euangelium obseruare, ex cap. 1. Regulæ & vltimo* seeing therfore according to their parterne and master *Christ Iesus*, who as wholy writte recordes, began to doe and teach: they first practise in themselfes and then preach, que

In the F Minors.

W add. to. 1. ad ann. 1245.

W add.

stionlesse

ſtionleſſe they wil be great in the kingdome of heauen *Qui facit & docet hic Magnus vocabitur in Regno celorum* for the harueſt of many ſoules they ſhall reape by that manner of preaching, & he that will be greateſt amõgſt Chriſt Diſciples let him be Minor minor I ſay in all temporall ſubſtance and eſtimation of himſelfe, ſo that they prefix no terme or limite of ſuch an hũble deſcẽt but that they be always Minor: to wit, in their owne eſtimatiõ, is he at litle as that calles himſelfe *Vermis & non homo & abiectio plebis* a worme and no man and the contempt of the people? Minor leſſer yet is he as litle as he that for Gods ſake renounceth all propriety in particular, though not in Common. Minor and ſo *in infinitum* with out limite in an humble deſcent *qui enim ſe humiliat exaltabitur* he that ſo minorizes himſelfe ſhal highly be preferred: this is the path their example and Maſter *Chriſt Ieſus* trode of whom ſaint Paul *quis eſt qui aſcendit niſi & qui deſcendit* who is he that aſcends, to wit aboue all the heauens to glory but he that deſcẽded is minoriſed and made inferior as it were to the Angels, which being ſo *Dominicus Graſſus* (Patrone of Religious and paragon Defender of the faith of this age) in his booke called *Vox turturis* worthyly ſaith that the F. Minors profeſſion, is *altiſſima, celos tranſit, par Angelis eſt, Angelica ſimilis puritati* and then in 392. page hauen recounted as a thing worthy of admiration that the Turkes in Paleſtine doth nourish and maintaine diuers

Splendor of the Dominicans p. 2 c. 14.

Conuents of this Order, to wit in Mounte Sion, Ieruſalem at the holy ſepulcher, in Bethlē, in the Valley of Ioſaphat at Nazareth, Mounte Oliuet, Bethania and at Iordaine, in fine he attributes this ſingular prerogatiue vnto them for the perfect imitation and conformity they haue with Chriſts life let vs heare him ſpeake himſelfe, *fifthly and congruently* (ſaith he) *for the holy lande, our Lord hath elected the Seraphicall Freers ſeing that the holy land is the houſe of God and Porte of heauen, therfore it is behouefull it ſhould haue ſuch Miniſters or ſeruants which in name and deed doe imitate the Cœleſtiall ardent Seraphims, the cuſtody of the cribbe where Chriſt was poorely borne is due and aggreable to thoſe who profeſſe pouerty in the higheſt degree. The poſſeſſion of the ſepulcher with other places where the wonders of Chriſt works are recorded was to be deputed to the Order of him in whoſe fleſh were imprinted the Stigmats of Chriſt crucified, in Mounte Oliuet and the Valley of Ioſaphat, houſes were to be aſſigned to them where he ſhall haue in a readines the poore to iudge the twelue Tribs of Iſrael,* Iob. 36. *ſeing alſo we reade that the poore ſhall iudge.* Thus he & leaſt peraduēture you may thinke he doe exeede where he makes them partakers of the iudicatory power for their preſent voluntary pouerty: haue though I good to confirme the ſame prerogatiue by the authority of many Fathers *Saint Gregorie Nazianzen* in his Oration againſt Iulian the Apoſtat, among other praiſes of a Monaſtical life, reckoneth alſo,

that

that they are to sit vpon Thrones to iudge. S. *Hierome* in a certaine Epistle of his sayth: It is proper to the Apostles and Christians to offer them selues to God, and casting the mites of their pouertie with the widdow into the Treasurie of the Church, to deliuer all the substance which they had to our Lord; and so deserue to heare: *You shall sit vpon thrones iudging the twelue Tribes of Israel.* S. *Augustin* (an approued and sure Author) sayth the same: (They that haue not followed (sayth he) that great and perfect Counsel of Perfection, o Selling all, and yet keeping themselues free from damnable crimes, haue fed our Sauiour in those that are hungrie, shal not sit on-high to iudge with Christ, Neither must we thinke that heauenlie Bench and Court shal haue but twelue Iudges to sit, but by the number of twelue, the whole generalitie is expressed); for whosoeuer sait S. Gr. spurred on with the loue of God, shall leaue his possessiõs, shal doubtles obtaine a high seate of Iudicature, coming as a Iudge together with the Iudge, because in consideration of that Iudgement he punished himselfe here by volũtarie Pouertie. Venerable *Bede* (an approued & learned Author) is not to be omitted. He discoursing of this promise of our Sauiour in S. *Matthew*, of which he had o ten spoken, sayth in this manner: A iust reward, that they, who for Christ contemned here the glorie of humane preferment, should there be glorifyed by Christ, sit as Iuges in spe-

cial commission with him. And let no man thinke, that only the twelue Apostle shal then be Iudges, because, after the fal of Iudas. S. *Matthias* was chosen in his roome: as there be not only twelue Tribes to be iudged: for els the Tribe of *Leui*, which is the thirteenth, should scape vniudged; and S. *Paul*, who is the thirteenth Apostle, should be depriued of his place of Iudicature; whereas he sayth: *Doe you not know that we shal iudge the Angels?* For we must know that al they, that according to the example of the Apostles, haue left al they had, and followed Christ, shal come with him as Iudges, as al man-kind is to be iudged. For because by the number of Twelue in holie Scripture the generalitie is often signifyed, therefore by the twelue Seates of the Apostles the generalitie of all them that shal iudge and by the twelue Tribes of Israel the generalitie of them that shalbe iudged, is expressed vnto vs.) O fauour of familiaritie! O heigh of honour! O priuiledge of confidence! O prerogatiue of perfect securitie! S. (*Bernar. ser. qui habitas*) Happie is the voluntarie Pouertie, my Lord Iesu, of those that haue forsaken al, and followed thee. Doubtles a most blessed Pouertie, which makes men so secure, yea so glorious in that so hideous a dissolution of the elements, so feareful a trial of deserts, so doubtful an expectation of iudgemẽt.) Which priuiledge as you may read in the Cronikles of the *Freer Minors*, by God was graunted to S. *Francis* and

his

his Order.

Pardon me (Gentle reader) if I haue curtilized the Maiesty of this Order and exhibited it in so transitory a view, for it was neuer my intent to vndertake in a few pages to declare that which many Authors in diuers volumes though departing there labours (some for the history of the Saints others for famous acts others for the descriptiõs of Prouinces others for famous writers &c.) yet were neuer able to atcheiue or compasse it. To some peraduenture I may seeme to tedious, but let them know I was enforced to it partly by the vniust calumniations of some who thinkes that this and other Orders are *inutilia terræ pondera &c.* (for other Orders they I doubt not but when occasion serue will both celebrate and defende themselues hauing men of rare talents) for my part incited by the example of the Psalmiste in sucha case who saies *Deus laudem meam ne tacueris: quia os peccatoris & os dolosi super me apertum est*, though I claime not the prerogatiue of the best abilities yet I haue endeauored to put the brightsome light of the F. Minors from vnder the bushel of the malignant tongues and pennes who labours to obscure them, and I haue desired to place it one the candlestick that all may in a manner see their good works, and glorifie the Father in heauen all which I haue performed out of approued good authors without disparaging any other Order who haue euery one their proper ex-

celleney

cellency, but only shewing without comparison that they haue such attributes as may ranke them amongst those Orders which are esteemed most perfect and beneficiall, without denying euery one in his kinde to be most perfect: partly also and principally that it may appeare that S. *Clare* (whose history wee now publish to the view of the world) receiued hir Rule from so highly dignified a Patriarke who deseruedly is styled the Repairer of Gods Church as is pemomstrated before and now is further confirmed by the funerall monument Gregory the 9. put. vpon the S. Shrine which I haue put for a final onclusion of this chapter

Epitaphium sepulchri B. P. Francisci.

V. S. C. A.

Francisci Romani
Celsa humilitate conspicui
Christiani orbis fulciamenti
Ecclesiæ reparatoris
Corpori nec viuenti nec Mortuo
Christi Crucifixi plagarum
Clauorumq insignibus admirando
Papa Nouæ feturæ collacrymans
Lætificans & exultans
Iussu, manu, munificentia posuit
Anno Domini M. C C. XXVIII.
XVI. Kalendas Augusti.
Ante Obitum Mortuus, post obitum viuus.

Quatuor littera capitales ita explicantur viri Seraphici, Catholici, Apostolici Romani vero dicitur Frãciscus, summam erga Romanam Ecclesiam subiectionem, constantemque erga Romanã fidem effectũ.

Wadd. inappéd. ad opus. S Fran. S. Frãcis pillar of the Christian world & Repairer of the Church.

The institution of the Order of Sainte Clare.

CHAP. III.

OVR great God who doth tryumph, ouer whatsoeuer doth oppose his, power, and is author of Trophies and victories in heauen, in earth, and in hell: hath in all times in his Conquests made vse of weake Souldiers, and hath pleased to make choise of weake things, to confound the mighty of this world; the diuine Apostle, Doctor of the *Gentiles* and disciple of heauen astonished at so great a miracle, cryed out: The wisdome of this world is folly before God, he hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, as if he would say, the omnipotent (whose iudgements are inserutable) hath chosen. worldly ignorace, & folly to cõfound the wise and. hath prepared to battle with the weakest forces, to surmoũt and ouercome the strong & mighty: this was manifest in the holy Apostles, since *Iesus Christ* our Redeemer for to surmount the furious and rauening wolues sent meeke and humble sheepe, which to humaine iudgment is most preposterous to send sheep in to the middest of wolues *Ecce ego mitto vos, sicut oues in medio luporum*, but this is the counsell of our great Captaine, and cheife generall that the conquest and victorie may be at-

1. *Cor.* 3

Matth. 10.

tributed to him, it is I that send you feare not and it is my pleasure that your weaknes should be the instrument of my glorie: truly this is the strongest and most prodigious miracle, for poore fisher men, ignorant, vnlearned, not grounded in science and worldly wisdome, preaching in simplicity without loftie subtilitie or artificial Rethorick, to convert the wisest and subtilest Philosophers, and to bring vnder the yoke of Christ the most Barbarian and cruell nations, subiugating vnder the diuine law the greatest Tirants and Potentats of the earth: maintaining Gods cause with most forcible arguments, manfully denouncing and proclaiming the truth to the Princes of the earth, who captiuated by their Preaching abiured their false superstition wherin so many yeares they had bene bredde, embracing the new and vnknowne doctrine of these Apostolicall Preachers the Dinell being compelled to yeeld the field to these inuincible Champions, no longer able to subsist in the presence of so great a light, tooke his flight in to the caues of horror and darknes.

The same Allmighty power and wisdome of God is manifestly declared and most liuely set forth in S. *Francis*, who was humble, despised of the world, without learning acquired humaine, or diuine, his humility was so great as he reputed himselfe the greatest sinner in the world, trembling before the face of God, passing whole nights in the repetition and pon-

deration

deration of the ensuing words; *Lord what art thou, and What am I*, thus annihilating himselfe in comparison of God there was not any thing that appeared so vile and contemptible in his sight as himselfe; for which cause God chose him to vphold the frame of the militant Church which was shaken and ready to fall; so as he repaired many breaches, caused by the batterie and artillerie of the enemies (wherby many soules passed to the seruice of Satan) repairing and fortifying them with the bull-works and trenches of Sanctitie, Humility, Obedience, Chastity, Pouerty, and Contempt of the world.

But more singularly hath our Lord made manifest the greatnes of his power when this generous Captaine of the Christian warfare, not onely leuied souldiers of his owne company, but sounding euery where the Allarum and trumpet, for to enrolle vnder the seruice of *Iesus Christ* the weake Feminine sex, (by nature timerous, and fearfull,) who now with a manly, and generous courage, doe proclaime most bloudie and implacable warre against the powers of darknes, and the infernall Dragons, and all his complices; affranchising themselues from his seruitude, insulting ouer him, by a glorious victorie, trapling him vnder foot despicing all riches and voluptuous pleasures, to embrace profound humility, strict Pouerty, austeritie of life, the abnegation of the will, and a life wholy Euangelicall.

Digitized by Google

The institution of the Order of S. Cl.

For the glorious Paranymph S. *Francis* the yeare 1212. by commandemēt of the Crucifix at S. *Damians* instituted an Order for Woemen in all points like to the Freer Minors, the same in substance, words, and sentences, except some few points incompatible with their sex, the which six yeares before, replenished with a propheticall spirit he fortold when with feruor and diligence, he laboured in the reparation of S. *Damians* Church, *Assist for the loue of God in this building* (sayd the Saint to all passengers and beholders) *For this Church shalbe a Monasterie of peore Dames by whose life and renowne the heauenly Father shalbe glorifyed ouer all the world.* Behold the words of S. *Clare* in her testament, *with great ioy and illumination of the holy Ghost he Prophecyed of vs,* (to wit S. *Francis*) *that which our Lord. Hath since fulfilled, for standing on the walls of the sayd Church he called with a loud voice in the french tongue on some peore folks therby dwelling saying come help me in this Church of S. Damians for there shall come Woemen by whose life and holy conuersation our heauenly father shall be honoured in his whole Church. wherin wee may marke the great bounty of God towards vs who out of his aboundant mercy and charity did vouchsafe to Prophesie these things. By his seruant of our vocation and election and not only of vs did our holy Father foretell these things but also of those who hereafter shall be partakers of the vocation which our Lord hath called vs vnto.*

Luc. Wadd. appar. 5. num. 12. Idem an 1253. §. 5

The words of sainte Clare in her testament

Now the first of this generous enter-

prise

prise, was *Clare* an honorable Damosell of the the Cytie of *Assisium* noble by race and extraction, but more illustrious and renowned for her virtues, and heroyicall acts: the eldest daughter of S. *Francis*, Mother of the Religious called Poore Clares or Dames of *Saint Damian*, the bright mirrour of purity, and sanctity, the magazin, or storehouse of all virtue, and perfection, serving for an example to posterity, beating the way for many noble soules, which by heauens decree, were to be enroled vnder her lawes and discipline, consecrating their virginity to the heauenly spouse. The Rule which the Seraphicall father S. *Francis* gaue vnto her was approoued by the souueraine Rishops Innocent the third and Alexander the fourth.

The institution of the third Order Of Saint Francis called the Order of pennance.

CHAP. IV.

THE glorious and Seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, hauing instituted his first Order of the Freer Minors, and soone after the second called the Order of S. *Clare*, was much perplexed in mind: wherfore often imparting this busines with his most familiar

Brethren

Brethren: he sayd vnto them, my deerest Brethren, I beseech you to giue me your aduise, Which were most conuenient to Gods honour, of these two exercises, whether I should wholy apply my selfe to prayer, and contemplation, or by preaching to teach the ignorant the way of saluation, in prayer wee speake to God, wee heare him speaking to vs, and leading an Angelicall life, wee conuers more in heauen with the Angells, then with men vpon earth, where on the contrary in preaching wee must conuerse with worldlings, liuing amongst them to conuers them and denounce the truth vnto them, hearing from them, many vaine and vnprofitable things neuertheles I behold how our Lord and Redeemer Christ Iesus who is the souueraine goodnes the Rule and modelle of diuine Wisdome) hath taught and denounced the diuine doctrine, wherby he hath saued Soules Redeemed by his pretious blood; for these considerations I require your aduise and counsell, because our Lord hath neuer vouchsafed to reueale the same vnto me, notwithstanding I haue dayly sought it of him with much instancie; the Religious replyed they were not capable to counsell him in this important affaire; the humble *Francis* with an inflamed Zeale of the diuine seruice willed Brother Mace to be called and sayd vnto him. Goe in companie of Brother Philip to our Sister Clare and bidd her from me, to present her prayers vnto God with all her Sisters beseeching him to intimate vnto me his Diuine pleasure herein, and from thence goe vnto the mount Sabasio to seeke out Brother Syluester (Whom the

By prayer wee speake to God.

S. Francis demands the assistance of the S. Cl. prayers

hol

holy Ghoſt hath made worthy of the diuine communication, tell him, the ſame from me: Brother *Mace* hauing executed his commiſſiõ, at his returne *S. Francis* receiued him with great charity waſhing his feet and preparing him to eat, then he ledde him to a mountaine, falling on his knees: his head vncouered and his armes extended in forme of a Croſſe, expecting the precept of his God and Creator, ſayd vnto Brother *Mace what is the will and pleaſure of my Lord Ieſus Chriſt.* Brother *Mace* replyed, brother *Siluester* falling to prayer receiued a reuelation from heauen, *that God had not called you to this vocation, for your priuate profit but that by your predications many ſoules plunged in ſinne might be conuerted vnto pennance*, And the ſame was reuealed vnto Siſter *Clare* and this is the abſolute wil of God: *S. Francis* but hearing theſe words of the Will of God and vtility of his neighbour pronounced, anſwered *let vs goe in the name of God, Brother Mace, let vs goe*, and transported with feruour of ſpirit he preſently began his way hauing taken Brother *Angelo* for a third, being now become the herauld of heauen, the terror of the earth, the trumpet of the Ghoſpell, the Patrone of pennance, and conſolation to the iuſt, aſcourge to ſinners, and a profeſſed enemie to vice, proclaiming open warre againſt the flesh, the world, the diuel, and hell. He knew not whether he went but letting himſelfe to be guided by the ſpirit of God, he arriued at a towne called *Cornerio*

S. Francis is called by God to conuers ſinners.

a mile

a mile distant from *Assisium* planting the standard of pennance, there he preached to the poeple with great feruor, & edification, from all sides men and woemen, poore and rich, gentlemen and husband men, Ecclesiasticall & secular flocked for to heare him, beholding him as a man come from heauen, or an Angell of the new testament sent from God, to teach heauenly things: instructing the ignorant, conuerting sinners, and setting vp a schoole of sanctity and perfection, his words were like fire penetrating the hearts of his hearers, leauing them contrite and penitent, mollifying the most obdurate hearts; his preaching was without humaine Rhetorike or Eloquence but the holy Ghost spake by his mouth: many amongst them staying with him to doe pennance, returned no more to their houses; others would haue forsaken wife and childrē, houses and liuings to follow him, and effect his holy counsels; but the Saint Forbad them, exhorting them to walke vprightly in the presence of God, keeping his commandements bringing vp their children and familie in the feare of God shunning sinne and vice: and he would not faile to teach them the way to heauen.

Lm. W add. ad ann. 1221. §. 13.

The fruites of S. Fr. preaching.

But all in vaine, for this people no longer able to withstand the feruent impulsions of the holy Ghost, would not agree to returne vnto their houses, vntill he had admitted and receiued them all for Brothers and

Sisters

Sisters of his Order, thus by diuine instinct the yeare 1221. the Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* instituted the third Order of pennance, which is for all sorts of persons, virgins, married, widdowes, both men and woemen, giuing them a Rule and forme of liuing, which might be obserued of all Christians liuing in the world, wherby they might amidst the stormes and surging seas of this life, offer vnto God their bodyes and soules as a pleasing and holy sacrifice. The Standardbearer, conductor, or eldest sonne of the third Order of Pennance, who first receiued the habit from S. *Francis*, was B. Lucius or Lucheſius, who abandoning militarie employments, hauing bene a valiant Captaine, in the Guelphian faction, he now retired dedicating himselfe wholy to the seruice of God, visiting hospitalls, receiuing the poore into his house, practising all the works of mercy corporall, and spirituall: after his death he hath bene illustrious for many miracles.

S. Bon. c. 4. §. 5 Chro. 9. c. 1. *The institution of the Order of pennance.* Luc. Wadd. ad ann. 1221. §. 14. Ieem 1242. §. 7. 14.

This third Order of S. *Francis* in its beginning & first age, hath bene of so great esteeme, as generally all sorts of persons embraced this happy kind of life, many Archbishops, Bishops, and Ecclesiasticall Prelates of great authority, made it their whole ambition to be inrolled therin, together with many Emperours and Empresses, Kings, Queenes, Princes, and Princesses, with innumerable of lower ranck, many of them being Canonised or beatifyed

tifyed. For the satisfaction of the reader I will here insert a Catologue of the most renowned persons who haue made their entry into heauen, through this secure port S. Lewis the pearle of kings most refulgent Sunne amongst princes did illustrate that golden time *Henry* king of Dacia, S. *Elzear* Coũt of *Arian* of prouence, S. *Iue* Priest wel versed in Ciuile & Canon law, B. *Robert* Prince of *Riminie*, S. *Roch* Soane to a Prince liuing nere to *Mountpellier*. B. *Leo* Archbishop of *Millan* B. *Chautier* Bishop of *Tremise* illustrious for many miracles. B. *Bartholomew* of *Geminiano* Priest who merited to see *Iesus Christ* enuironed with a troope of Angells, B. *Conrade* of *Plaisance* beatifyed by *Leo* the tenth

S. *Elizabeth* widdow daughter to the King of *Hungarie*, S. *Iane* of the crosse, S. *Elizabeth* queene of Portugall daughter to *Peter* King of *Arrogan*, S. *Brigit* princesse of sweda, B. *Angela* of Fulginia, B. *Iane* of Signa, B. *Margarit* of *Cortonne*, B. *Rose* of *Viterbe*, B. *Viridian* B. *Clare* of *Mont Falco* in whose heart after her death was found imprinted a Crucifix with all the mysteries of the passion of *Iesus Christ*. It doth well appeare that our Lord speaking to S. *Francis* by the *Crucifix*, did not say in vaine *Goe Francis repaire my house which is ready to fall* neither must wee vnderstand by these words the restauration of the materiall temples but the institution of the three Orders signifyed by the three Churchs.

Of

Of B. Hortulana *the Mother of* Sainte Clare.

CHAP. V.

THis noble Arke of Noe floting on the deluge repeopling the world, had but three lofts according to the saying of scripture, the incomparable Doctor saint Augustine allegorising hereon, sayth it was to signify the three estates in the Church; of virgins, widdowes, and marryed people: another Doctor discoursing herevpon compareth virginity to gold, widdowhood to siluer, & marryage to lead, as gold is the King of mettals and the most noble: euē so virginity is the most eminent & excelleth all other estates: Continency is compared to siluer for that it is an allay or matter more refined, and an estate more free: Maryage to lead, because it is a charge very burdensome and a heauy yoake Compassed with a thousand discontents, Iealousies, miseries, & misfortunes, so that many the first day of their marryage, haue not stuck to extoll the happy cōdition of those that were free because for one good day, they finde a hundred bad, and for one Rose of pleasure, a million of thornes of afflictions, others are impeached in the important busines of their saluation by the intrication of worldly affaires, which in

Gen. 6. S. Aug. l. 15. de ciu. c. 16 Theophil in 1. Epi. ad Tim. 4.

Digitized by Google

that state doth stop the progresse in spirituall life, hereof wee haue a liuely example in the Parable in the Ghotpell where many being inuited to the Royall supper he only who had
Luc. 14 espoused a wife gaue the flat denyall, answering that his impediments were such, as he could not come.

Neuerthelesse the condition is good, and needfull for the conseruation of the world, & pleasing to the diuine maiesty, for God himselfe hath
Gen. 2. bene the first author and institutor of it in the terrestriall Paradice, and state of Innocency, and hath ratifyed it with his presence, honouring it with his first miracles, at the wedding
Ioan. 2. in Galile, it is a Sacrament which doth contribute grace, representing the vnion of the diuine word with humaine nature, of God with the soule, and of *Iesus Christ* with his Church: wherby many haue receiued singular and great fauours from our Lord, and haue in that estate bene adorned with rare perfections, and renowned in sacred histories. The B. *Hortulana* mother to the glorious virgin *S. Clare* was linked in matrimonie to a nobie knight of the
Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1212. §. 14. Petrus Rodulp. fol. 137. Citie of *Assisium* (called by the Italiens *Chase*) in the vally of *Spoleto*: her husbands name was *Fauorin* Sonne to *Paule* of *Scesi* of an Illustrious Familie, hauing much wealth and riches, this Lady *Hortulana* bare vnto him three daughters by name *Clare Agnes*, and *Beatrix* they liued after a most honorable and eminent manner, holding the cheife ranke in the City both for

their

their noble extraction, exemplar life and virtuous acts, liuing in great peace and coniugall affection, and admirable sympathie of humors: a thing most recommendable according to the saying of the Wiseman, three things doe infinitely content me and doe please both God and man, peace betweene brethren, loue of our neighbour and vnion betweene man and wife, contrariwise to behold a marryed couple at dissagreement, is to see two enemies fastned to one crosse, & two criminels chained together. *Hortulana* exhibited honour and respect to her husband as to her Lord, and Maister, conforming her selfe to his will in all things iust and lawfull; ruling her children and familie in the feare of God; and although she was busied like S. *Martha* in her domesticall affaires buying and prouiding things, necessarie in time conuenient, hauing an eye to all things for the gouuernment of her familie, being not ignorant, that the care and vigilancie of the Masters eye according to the Prouerbe doth make Fat the horse and enrich the ground. on the contrary she did not omit to imbrace the condition of S. *Mary Magdalen*; For she was very intense and feruent in prayer, and most deuout in the enioying of heauenly fauours: but aboue all shee felt vnspeakable sweetnes in the deuout contemplation of the dolorous Passiõ of our sacred Redeemer *Crist Iesus*, from thence she drew inflamed desires to aduance her selfe in the loue of God, *Eccles.25*

Digitized by Google

she nourrished & releiued the poore, applying her selfe to the Works of mercy: This vertuous Ladie did manifest the piety and great deuotiō of her mind by many pilgrimages which she vndertooke and performed both beyond & on this side the seas: she visited with great feruour of spirit the tombes of the two Princes of the Apostles S. *Peter* & S. *Paule* in the Citie of Rome; she trauelled to the Church of the glorious Archangell S. *Michaell* on mount *Gargonne* in the kingdome of Naples, and which is more with a manly courage and magnanimous spirit she passed the Seas with many other Pilgrimes and visited the holy Land and places which our Redeemer *Christ Iesus* had consecrated with his sacred presence, from whence she returned much consolated and enriched with many merits: this custome truly was very plaudable in our predecessors (but more admirable then imitable in the Feminine sex) who with so great toyle, charges, incommodities and deuotion, haue performed this pietie but is now so decayed, that the feruour amongst Christians in visiting the places which our Redeemer hath sanctifyed by his death and Passion is almost quite extinguished by the continuall warres betweene Christian Princes (a thing most deplorable) in lieu that they should bend all their forces and power against the Enemies of God and the Catholike faith, in imitation of the puissant Emperour and King of France, S. *Charlemaigne* who deli-

Chron. p. 1. l. 8. c. 1. Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1212. §. 13.

uered

uered the Citie of *Hierusalem* and *Spaine* from of the hard seruitude of the Saracens, of the most Christian King of France *Lewis* who tooke the strong Citie of *Damiat* in *Egypt* and wonne many notable victories ouer the enemies of God and Infidels: and by another long iourney by sea he passed into Affricke with a mighty nauy and strong Armie; but the plague infected the whole Country wherof *Iohn* of France his sonne dyed with many Earles and Barons of his Court, and finally he himselfe was taken with it wherfore bowing downe vnder the Palme before the Citie of *Thunes* in *Affrick*, he theredied. Of the valorous & renowned *Godfrey* duke of Loraine who (for this purpose sold his Dukedome of *Bullen* to *Albertus* Bishop of *Liege*) and was chosen afterwards King of *Hierusalem*: of the most virtuous *Thierie* of *Elsace* Count of Flanders: who trauelled foure times to the holy Land to recouer certaine places forth of the possession of the Turke and Barbarians, in requitall of these his pious labours *Foulques* of *Anioy* King of *Hierusalē* the year 1148. did giue vnto him some parcell of the sacred Bloud of our Redeemer *Christ Iesus* gathered vp by *Ioseph* of *Aramathia*, wherwith the Count inriched the Chappell of S. *Basile* in the faire and magnificent Citie of *Bruges*: it is shewed to this very day euery ftyday with great reuerence and deuotion; it was brought from beyond sea by B. *Leo* Abbot of the most famous and renowned Abbey

Saint Lewy, Ribadeneira in his life.

Paule emiss. l.3. histor Godfrey Duke of Bullen.

Peter Oudergheest Annal. of Fland c.737

of

of *S, Bartus*: finaly of the renowned *Baudrayne* Count of *Flanders* afterward created Emperour of *Constantinople* for his noble exployts and martiall prowesse and trophies: leauing out of the list many other Christian Kings and Princes who haue exposed their kingdomes, riches and liues for to subdue and destroy the Barbarous nation of the *Sarrazins* and Turkes and set Free the holy Land which our Redeemer hath sanctifyed with his precious bloud and sacred presence.

The admirable patience of B. Hortulana and how she became Religious and of her happy death.

CHAP. VI.

THis virtuous Lady *Hortulana* persenering constant in the seruice of God applying her selfe to the exercises of true Christian pyetie, she merited to be prooued in the furnace of tribulation and affliction, the touchstone of true virtue and certainely many times our greatest happines is neer at hand knocking at the gate of our soule whē it is most replenished with sorrow and affliction, to this agreeth the saying of the Prophet *tribulation begets the knowledge of ones selfe, prosperity doth*

infatuate

infatuate and dull the spirit, and on the contrary affliction doth quicken the vnderstanding and produceth the knowledge of God & ones selfe: whē wee flow in delights wee forget heauē & neuer thinke of death; but when wee are on all sides assaulted with tribulatiōs, life becomes irksome, wee long for death, all our thoughts desires and affections aspiring to heauen, the scourge of tribulation is for many respects very profitable to man, imbellishing the exteriour and interiour, doth compell the sinner perforce to turne vnto God, teacheth the ignorant, fortifyeth those that runne in the Race, defendeth the infirme, awaketh the sluggish, humbleth the proud and haughtie, purgeth the penitent, crowneth the innocent, augmenteth pietie and deuotion, and aduanceth the iust to all sanctity and perfection; as wee may find in many histories, but that of the B. *Hortulana* shall content vs for the present, she was linked with a most cordiall and inseparable loue to her husband *Fauorine* louing him as her owne soule and he conformable to his name, was most fauorable and endeeredly kind vnto her, now the Almighty Creatour to make tryall of his seruants patience and to draw her affection more intensiuely to himselfe: assaulted her on the part most sensible, depriuing her of her Husband by death incident to all the children of *Adam*: this seruant of *Iesus Christ* seeing her selfe thus depriued of her cheefest ioy and comfort, in the flower of her age, receiued this

affliction with inuincible patience, resounding a most sweet harmonie in her suffrance saying with the Prophet Iob *our Lord hath giuen, our Lord hath taken, as it hath pleased our Lord so is it done, the name of our Lord be blessed*, and with the vertuous Ladie *Melanie* mentioned by S. *Hierome* who hauing lost her husband and two children vpon one day casting her selfe on her knees at the foot of the *Crucifix* sayd I *see very well and plainly perceiue what it is that you require of me my God, my loue and affection was fastned vpon my husband and children you haue depriued me of them, desiring to possesse my loue alone without any riuall. I willingly resigne it and consecrate it vnto you from my heart:* in like sort B. *Hortulana* hauing lost her Husband by soudaine and vnexpected death which makes the potentates of the earth to stoope: with great magnanimity vttered these words, *O my God and soueraigne Creator, my loue was to fast setled vpon my Husband wherfore you haue deprined me of him, your holy name be praysed, now I doe wholy resigne and consecrate my soule and affection with all I possesse in this world to your seruice*: but as great exploits are not to be vndertaken and atcheiued without counsell and aduise, after that her two daughters *Clare* and *Agnes* had forsaken the world, hauing none left with her but her little *Beatrix*, she besought the holy Father S. *Francis* to visit her and comfort her in her widdowhood and afflictions, she discouered and layd open vnto him the secrets of her

Iob. 1.

S. Ierome epist. ad Paulum.

heart

heart, disclosing the desire she had to consecrate her selfe to God in the Conuent of her daughter, forsaking all her Friends, riches, and delights, the holy Father praysing and magnifying God that he had the meanes to sacrifice both the Mother and the daughter to his diuine Maiesty granted her suite, wherfore she following his wholesome aduise, disposed of her house and familie, putting her little daughter *Beatrix* into the custodie of a noble knight called *Monaldo* brother to her husband, destributing the remainder of her goods most liberally to the poore, then the Seraphicall Father cut of her haire at the Conuent of S. *Damian* giuing her the sacred veile of Religion, and a course abiect habit of the Order, (wherfore now to the honour of this noble Ladie wee may sing with the Royall Prophet *my soule blesse our Lord and all things which are within me magnify his holy name*, *who hath filled me with good things*. & accõplished the desire of his seruant for her youth hath bene renewed like vnto the Eagle, since that she hauing attained to an elder age, did performe the humble offices of Nouices and of young Religious, with great feruour and allacrity of spirit and being a Mother esteemed her selfe happy to be the daughter to her daughter yeelding her all Obedience, submission and reuerence vndergoing couragiously all the austerities of the Order as fastings, watchings, disciplines, and other such like mortifications,

Pet. Rodulph. fol. 139. Luc. W add. ad annũ 1253. §. 25. S. Francis geues the habit to B. Hortulana. Psal. 102

Their vertues did combine them more strictly together in loue and affection, by how much more that grace and nature cõioyned together is of more force then nature only: this B. Hortulana was adorned with so great virtue and perfection that often times S. *Francis* and S. *Clare* did send vnto her many infirme afflicted creatures to be comforted and cured by her merits, and prayers: Ther was one day presented vnto S. *Clare* a child of Perusia hauing a Filme vpon his eye, she making the signe of the holy Crosse vpon the eye, sent the child to Sister Hortulana who also blessed it, and the child was presently cured, whervpon there arose a holy debate amongst the Religious whether this miracle proceeded from the merits of the daughter, or the Mother, but S. *Clare* ended the striffe assuring them that Sister Hortulana was of power to doe great matters with the diuine Maiesty, finally this good Lady imbellished with many rare vertues and perfections left this transitorie life to enioy the eternall in the vision and fruition of God who hath adorned her with the splendor of miracles before and after her death, she was buried at S. *Damians*, and after translated to the Church of S. *George* where she is now intombed with her two daughters S. *Clare* and B. *Agnes*.

Chr. p. 1 l. 8 c. 21 Wadd.

The death of B. Hortulana.

Of

Of the birth of S. Clare and of the etimologie of the names of the mother and the daughter.

CHAP. VII.

NOtwithstanding that for the most part names are imposed accidentaly and are giuen to children according to the will and pleasure of their parents yet many times it falleth out that the conditions of the person doth agree with the denominatiõ, & this wee find in holy writ, B. *Hortulana*, and glorious S. *Clare* may serue vs for an instance; for *Hortulana* in our tonguemay be called Gardiner and not without great misterie considering she was to produce so noble & virtuous a plant in the garden of the holy Church, which hath taken such encrease that her bowes and branches haue spread and extended ouer all the corners of the world so that the birdes of heauen haue harboured and built their nests in the bowes therof, that is a number of Religious soules who soaring vp with the wings of virtues doe raise vp them selues from terrestriall things fixing their thoughts on the contemplation of Celestiall things, sitting on the bowes of this tree to enioy the shade & shelter therof, there they remaine in heart and affection according

The etimologie of the name of Hortulana

The birds of heauen are the religious of sainte Clare.

to the saying of the diuine Apostle, *our conseruation is in heauen*: these virgins hauing an
Phil: 5. essay of the pleasant sweetnes of this plãt grafted by the wise & prudent gardener *Hortuiana*: haue made more reckoning of their poore and contemptible habit, of a straight and narrow Cell, of base and humble offices, of a slender and vnsauorie portion, taking more content therin, then the Ladies of this world doe find in their curious and fine dressings, their high and honorable titles, their stately and magnificent Pallaces, and their dantie delicious dishes. Now if the name of the mother hath giuen vs subiect and matter to discourse of a garden, the name of the daughter will serue for a warrent & guide to opẽ the doore to all such as desire to enter into it, to take the sent of these odoriferous flowers and fruitfull plants: B. *Hortuiana* being great with child & knowing herselfe to be neere her downe lyig prayig vnto God in a Church before a *Crucifix* beseechig the diuine maiestie to Free her from all perill of death in her childbirth which she much apprehẽded, she heard a voice proceeding from the *Crucifix* which sayd, *feare not woeman for without danger thou shalt bring forth a light which shall illuminate the Whole World*: hauing receiued this cõsolation and aduise from the diuine Oracle & being deliuered with great ioy the yeare 1194, she causfed the name of Clare to be giuen to the child at her Baptisme beleeuing firmely that in her shouldbe accõplished whatsoeuer was or-

Chr. p. 1. l. 8. c. 1. Wadd. ad ann. 1212. §. 85. The crucifix speakes to B. Hortuiana

dayned

ned and fortold by the diuine goodnes, neither was the hope she conceiued of the accomplishment of the promise made her by the heauēly Oracle made void, for she bestowed on the world a great light, & on heauen a great Saint, according to the straine sūg in her prayse, *Clara re, Clara nomine*: for she hath bene alight illuminating the Church not only by name or renowne but effectuall by the refulgent Rayes of of her admirable works and heroyicall acts, & her life adorned with the lustre of all virtues hath worthyly produced a number of rare flowers who by (the fragrancie and sweet Odour of their super-eminent perfections) haue perfumed the whole world, and the most bright Rayes of this now light haue penetrated in to the Pallaces of Princesses and Duchesses, darting their splendor in to the secret Closets of Queenes and Empresses in such sort that many Ladyes being sought in Marryage by Dukes Kings, Emperous, and Monarkes haue refused those Royall Espousalls together with all dignities, riches and delights, for to embrace Pouertie Humility, Chastity, pennance and mortification: in imitation of this resplendant light, the practise of Chastitie and the florishing garlandes of virginitie which were al most withered and decayed, did now againe reuiue in the world a new spring arising from the heat and splēdor of her life, adorning her beautifull garden with all sort of fragrant flowers of virtues.

Of the infancie of S. Clare and of her virtuous exercises,

CHAP. VIII.

Chr p.1 l. 8 c.2.

Clare the litle plant of B. *Hortulana* faire like the day, and gratious like an Angell, began presently to appeare and shine like a morning starre or faire *Aurora*, after the darke night of this world: for in her tender yeares and first infancie she expressed many signes of mature sanctity, wherby she manifested the goodnes of her nature, and the fauor wherwith God had indued her: she was of nature very tender and delicate, and of Capacity very apt and docile, she learned of her mother the first groũdes of Catholicke Religiõ: the holy Ghost by little and little framing this pure vessell of election till he brought it to the fullnes of diuine grace and perfection: her greatest delight and content was in piety and deuotion, in prayer she seemed to speake to God & his Angels: frequently withdrawing her selfe fõ company to powre forth her selfe in her Oratorie, there she layd open her heart and affection to her Creator powring forth riuers of sacred teares from her eyes: it was a thing very remarkable in this her tender yeares to see that not hauing beades wheron to say her prayers she made vse of a heape of little stones wherwith she num-

Wadd. ad annũ 1212. § 17. Niceph l 11, c. 36

bred

bred both the Paters and Aues, in this sort she sayd her deuotions in imitation of the deuout Father *Paul* liuing on the mount of Phermes who euery day sayd three hundred prayers hauing as many stones in his lap, and euery time casting one to the ground he payd as it were a tribute to God this little virgin beginning to feele the first feruours of diuine loue, iudged she must contemne all transitorie apparence & painted flowers of this world, and being in prayer well instructed by the holy Ghost she resolued as a wise spirituall merchant to haue no more regard to terrestriall affaires acknowledging them vnworthy to be esteemed, she did weare as an other *S. Cecily* a haire cloth vnder her rich and costly apparell so exteriourly satisfying the world, and interiourly her God and Creatour, *Chr. p. 1. l. 8. c. 2.*

She was wholy addicted to the works of mercie, bearing a singular affectiō to the poore and needy being not ignorant that he that cōpassionateth the poore and distressed, compassionateth *Christ Iesus*, in their person, and to the end her sacrifice might be more pleasing vnto God the most delicate meats that were giuen her for the nourishment of her little body, she hid and gaue it secretly to the poore, knowing by diuine light, that secret Almes are most meritorious, it suffising to be seene by him who can recompence the act, to auoid all ostentation and vaine honour, for otherwise the applause of the world might be the recō-

pence of the liberalitie, in this sort the soule of little *Clare* was replenished with Charity and compassion; But hauing attained to ripe age she was perswaded by her Parents to make choise of a husband: she amased at the sonnd of such an Allarum remained wounded in her heart at the noice of these vngratfull tidings (which to a pure virgin is a martirdome) to which she would neuer consent, but sought euasions and delayes therby protracting time the best she could to shunne maryage still recommending her Chastity to *Christ Iesus* her spouse with all the other virtues wherwith her soule was inriched; making a generous resolution to dye rather then to permit the Lillie of her virginall purity to be in the least sort soiled or faded, wherfore by all her indeauours she laboured to augment the lustre therof, and to become more gratious in the eyes of her Creator and heauenly spouse. Sueh were the first fruits of her spirit and the tokens of her sanctitie: so that being anoynted with such a sweet and precious oyntment she yeelded a most fragrant fauour as a closet replenished with most delightfull liquors, whose perfumes though they be shut vp discouer and manifest themselues, and in such sort this holy Virgin began without her knowledge to be extolled by her neighbours, the true fame of her secret pious works so publishing thēselues that in an instant they were exceedingly spread abroad and euery where diuulged.

How

How S. Clare *came to the knowledge of* S, Francis.

CHAP, IX.

THis Celestiall Doue *Clare*, hearing the great fame of the admirable life of S. *Francis* who then renewed to the world the way of perfection in the same Citie, with a maruellous example of pietie and sanctitie, and considering that many Gentlemen did follow him and that his life was allready approued by our holy mother the Church she conceiued a great desire to see and heare him, & to disclose vnto him her generous resolutions, S. *Francis* zealous of the good of soules and hauing heard the fame of her virtue, wayted the oportunity to meet with her; with intention to frustrate the world of so noble and pretious a prey, to present her to our soueraigne Redeemer, to serue him in some notable enterprise as preordayned of God to giue the foile to the prince of darcknes; neither did his diuine maiesty faile to open vnto them both the meanes, inspiring this virtuous Damsell to rely vpon an honorable and graue ancient matrone called *Bonne Guelfuccij* who gouerned her in her house as her mother: and to the end that her holy purpose might not be sinisterly

Luc. Wadd. ad annũ 1212. §. 18.

interpreted and to hinder publick murmure, she went forth with this good Matrone, vsing such prudent diligẽce that she found him who her soule desired, that she might receiue from his mouth as from the secretarie of the holy Ghost the diuine instructions of her saluation. The holy Father hauing louingly entertained her began to preach vnto her the contempt of the world, and by euident reasons to demonstrate vnto her that all the beauty of things present is but vanity filled with false and deceitfull hopes: he intimated vnto her the shortnes of this life and the continuance of eternitie, the obstacles and impediments in the way of saluation, and the many perils and snares which in the wide way of the world doe draw to damnation, then he propounded to her chast eares the honorable and amiable espousales of *Iesus Christ*, perswading her to conserue the Orient pearle of her virginall purity for her heauenly Spouse, who out of the loue he bare to vs being God became man and would be borne of a virgin. Thus the holy Father solicited that affaire, playing the part of a true Paranymph and Embassadour of the heauenly King, these diuine words penetrated the soule of this holy Damsell, her heart being set on fire with diuine loue, she now beganne very exquisitly to dispose her selfe to affect his pious exhortations, which she esteemed to be more then humaine, the world became irksome vnto her, desiring to dye vnto it, wherfore

begin-

beginning already to taſt the ſweetnes of heauenly contemplation she reſoluedto embrace a moſt innocent and holy life, she melted as it were with the loue of her heauenly ſpouſe, after whom she thirſted with a languishing deſire.

The *holy reſolution of* Sainte Clare,

CHAP. X.

When I conſider the Lyon of *Sampſon* lying dead in the lād of the Philiſtins, the throat filled with hony and the bowells with cruelty; I deeme it to be the true type of the world, which hath many pleaſures, Flatterie, and delights in apparance, but hath the bowells of a Lyon ſtuffed with cruelty, treacherie and deceit, it deceiueth a man and withdraweth him from the ſeruice of God, profereth him many comforts, pleaſures and charming delights, it feineth friendship promiſing honours dignities and promotions: but all tendeth to miſchiefe, leading to vtter ruine and diſtructiō yea to eternall damnation. The wiſe and prudent Damſell *Clare* well conſidering the vanity and deceit therof, made a holy reſolution to ſet it at naught, deſpicing and trampling vnder foot all honours, dignities, mariages, ſūptuous apparell, Iewells, and all wordly pelfe and to *Iud.* 14

ded *i-*

dedicate her selfe a liuing temple to *Christ Iesus* asking him for the only spouse of her body, and hauing wholy submitted her selfe to the counsels of the Seraphicall Father, she went vnto him with great feruour of spirit demanding of him whē and in what sort she should make her retire from the world; whervpon the holy father S. *Francis* ordained that on Palme Sūday she should come to the processiō with the rest of the people apparrelled in most rich & sumptuous manner, and that the night following she should goe forth of the City abandoning all the world and change the secular pleasures into lamentations of the death and passion of our sacred Redeemer: vpon Palme Sunday this Innocent Doue came to the processiō of the great Church in the company of her mother & other Ladyes; where fell out a passage worthy to be recorded as being done by the diuine ordination which was that all the other Ladyes going according to the custome of *Italy*, to take holy Palme and S. *Clare* with rare modesty out of a virginall bashfullnes remained alone without mouing out of her place; the Bishop descending from the steppes of his seate, put into her had a branch of Palme, a true presage and argument of what should be fall to this cō stant damsell: for our B. Sauiour represented by the Bishop would insinuate that the same night she should ascend to the Palme to gather the pleasant fruict therof.

Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1212 §. 19. 20.

Cant. 7. The Palme is the simbole of patience and

con-

constance, for it doth not shrinck at any oppression but the more you goe about to depresse and hold it downe by force or waight, the more it ascends and spreads is branches aloft. In like sort this couragious seruant of God was within short time to be depressed & humbled by her friendes & kindred, making tryall of all their power and force to withdraw her from her pious designes, but still, the more she rayssed vp her selfe in constancie, so that in fine they were constrained to depart yeelding them selues vanquished by her generositie.

The Palme is the symbole of victorie. Apoc. 5

The Palme is the signe of victory, the triúphant hand of the Conqueror being euer honoured with a Palme, the secretarie of our Redeemer doth auouch that he receiued from God the fauour to behold in heauen the soules of the Blessed clothed in white shining garments, and Palmes in their hands to declare the victorie they had gained ouery the Diuell & his tẽptations. The Bishop gaue this dãsell the misterious Palme to declare that she should triumph ouer the Diuell, the world, and the flesh by her teares and pennances: The Palme doth always conserue its greenesse and amongst all coulors there is not any that doth more comfort and strengthen the sight then greene, S. *Clare* receiued the Palme by the ordination of God frõ the hands of the Bishop for to signify that she should alwayes conserue the fresh greene of her virginall purity, a virtue most gratious and pleasing to the eyes of

The Palme is the type of virginitie.

the

the diuine maiesty: making the person like vnto the Angells according to the testimonie of our B. Sauiour, seruing for a mirour to draw many damsells in imitation of her to dedicate the integrity of their virginall purity to their heauenly spouse. Mat. 22

The Palme brings forth pleasant fruits.

The Palme hath moreouer this propertie that it produceth Dates, a fruict very pleasant and delicious though late, for first it must for many yeares be carefully cultiuated, and indure very much by the sharpnes and rigour of the winter, by snow, rayne, haile and tempests, euen so this incomparable Virgin was a long time (as she did the space of two and fortie years) to labour in the vine of holy Religion cultiuating the Palme tree by austere pennances, fastings, disciplines and mortifications before she could gather and tast the swee: fruite of euerlasting happines.

How saint Francis *withdrew* fainte Clare *from the world and made her Religious.*

CHAP. XI.

THe Noble Damsell *Clare* the Spouse of *Iesus Christ* wholy distrusting in her owne forces greatly apprehended that her new entreprise would be assaulted and impugned

by

by her friendes, and kindred, but calling to mind that for the atchieuing of any glorious enterprise there is no meanes so seeure as to haue recourse vnto God by holy prayer, he neuer forsaking those that shroud themselues vnder the wings of his protection, she began with intense fervour & the profusion of many teares to implore the diuine assistãce, knocking incessantly at the gate of the diuine clemencie by feruent prayer, she was not frustrated of her hope. For God who is allwayes pleased with the prayers of the humble, and doth accomplish the desires of the iust, inclining to their vowes and supplications destroyed the force of humaine power: inspiring her the way and meanes how to effect her holy designes, infusing into her soule an vndaunted courage to incounter the Prince of darckenes. Wherfore the night following Palme Sunday the yeare 1212. the 19. of *March* the 18. yeare of her age she began to prepare to accomplish the commaund of her spirituall guide and Director S. *Francis*, and to make a glorious flight and honorable retyre from the world in modest company; but it seeming to her impossible to goe forth at the ordinarie and cheefest doore of the house, she bethought her selfe to take the benefit of a back doore which (though it were dammed and closed vp with greate stones and mighty blockes) she with an admirable courage and force rather of a strong man then a tender young damsell, her selfe

Iudith. 9.

Chron. p 1. l. 8. c. 4. Wadd. ad ann. 1212. §. 21.

broke open; this then leauing her Fathers houſe, her Citie, kindred and Friendes; ſhe departed ſo priuatly that none had inkling, or knowleige therof, and with extraordinary ſpeed ſhe arriued at S. *Marie of Portiuncula* which is a quarter of a mile diſtant from *Aſſiſium*; where the Seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, with his Religious expected her: they receiued her with burning wax tapers ſinging the himne *Veni creator Spiritus*. This holy Virgin who ſought her Spouſe and Redeemer *Chriſt Ieſus* with Lampe not extinct & empty, but filled with diuine loue: and incontinently in the ſelfe ſame houre and place, hauing left and abandoned the impurities of *Babylon*, gaue the World the ticket of defiance before the Altar of the ſouereigne queene of Angells, where the glorious Father S. *Francis*, cut of her hayre, & then cloathed her with a poore. Habit of the Order: renouncing the Iewels, and gorgeous attire wherwith ſhe was adorned to be giuen to the poore to ſet forth here the deuotion of her minde, and the abondance of inuiſible graces which ſhe receiued in this veſtition, and the vnſpeakable ioy of her heart: is a thing altogether impoſſible: truly it had not bene conuenient that this new Order of Florishing virginity ſhould other wiſe begin, then in the Angelicall Palace of that great Lady and immaculate queene who alone was found worthy to be the mother of God without any detriment to her virginall purity: wherfore it

was

was most requisite, that in Church dedicated to her honour (as this of *Hortulana* was) should first spring the florishing vine of noble virgins: in this same place had the noble chiualry of the poore of *Iesus Christ* the Freer Minors their beginning vnder the valorous Captaine S. *Francis*, to the end it might euidently appeare that the mother of God in this her habitation ingendred and produced the one and the other Religion, choosing S. *Francis* and his B. daughter S. *Clare* for to renew and establish vpon the earth the spirit of our Lord and contempt of the world: making the one a Father of most honorable and illustrious children, and the other a mother of many virginall daughters, poore of temporall goods but enriched with spirituall gifts, and heauenly treasures: this beautifull and chast damsell hauing receiued the ensignes of holy penance, was conducted by the Seraphicall Father to the monasterie of Saint Paul which was of Religious woemẽ attired in black, to remaine there till allmighty God had prouided another Monasterie: now you may behold this new Spouse of *Christ Iesus* to enter a fierce and hard combat.

W *add. ad Annal.* 1212. §. 21.

How the kindred of sainte Clare laboured to withdraw her from the monasterie.

CHAP. XII.

THe cleare eyed blind world not able to support so great a light, and the Diuell fearing that the example of this virtuous Damsell would worke him some great ouerthrow resolued to wage warre against her, by her neerest kindred who most commonly are the domestical enemies of Religious persons; euery one thought it strange that a Damsell of a noble familie, beautifull, rich, & in the prime of her yeares, should abandon all pleasures, pomps, riches, and honours; for to embrace and vndertake a grosse patched habit vile and contemptible; and most rigid and austere penance; they deemed it would be to them a great affront if their kinswoman *Clare* liued in this poore estate; which in the sight of the blind world seemed miserable; wherfore coming to the monasterie of the Religious Woemen of S. *Paul* they vsed all the endeauors, which enraged folly suggested vnto them, to supplant her holy resolution; first profering all sort of obsequious seruice, and amiable friendship and courtesie, next shewing great

Chro. p. 1 l. 8 c. 5. Luc. Wadd. ad ann. 1211. § 22.

rigour

rigour, and vttering menacing threates, and lastly they attempted by force and violence to haue carryed her away, being not able to preuaile and surmount her by persuasions, and trying their strength against the meeke Lambe of *Christ Iesus*, they sought to intrap & deceiue the innocent Doue by their malice & wicked counsell: making her a thousand deceitfull promises to force her to yeeld and retire from so abiect and contemptible a life, protesting it was a thing vnworthy her noble birth, & that such an absurditie had neuer bene seene in their Cities: but she with an inuincible courage sayd vnto them: *Heare friends and kinsmen, when God doth speake, the World must be silent and giue place: and when God doth call, wee must fly to obey, though to the hazard and perill of a thousand liues: Christ Iesus hath called me to his seruice, I will obey him and will take him for the Spouse of my soule: and neuer will I settle my loue or affection on any but him*: and to oppose and withstand their violence, she tooke such fast hold of the Altar that she drew of the Altar cloathes and vncouering her head she shewed how her haire was cut of and sayd. *That she could not be separated from the seruice of her Redeemer for whose loue she had forsaken the World, and them also, and the more they did vex and torment her the more would her heart be inflamed in the loue of her God who would minister new forces vnto her to resist and ouercome.* Thus for many dayes together she was assaulted with iniuries and reproches, and

S. Clares answer to her kindred.

In the Bull of her Canonization.

many great contradictions and oppositions in the way of perfection, and notwithstanding that her friendes were obstinate and perseuerant in diuerting her from her pious resolution, neuertheles her zeale and feruor did not relent nor her courage faint, but on the contrary the contumelies and threats did augment her confidence in God and awake the generosity of her minde, so that in fine they were compelled to desist and retire with shame and confusion, in this sort did our Lord manifest his might and power giuing strength to the weake and feeble to surmount the strong and mighty of this world: some few dayes after she was conducted by our holy Father *Saint Francis* in company of two of his disciples Brother *Phillip* the long and Brother *Bernard Quintauall*, to the monasterie o the Religious Woemen of *Saint Angell* of *Panso* of the Order of S. *Benedict* neare to *Assisium*.

Lac. Wadd. ad annũ. 1212. §. 23.

How the B. Virgin Agnes was conuerted by the prayer of her Sister Sainte Clare and of the persecution she indured by her kindred.

CHAP. XIII.

Chron. 9. l. 1. & c. 6. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1212. §. 28.

Sainte Clare had a Sister younger then her selfe, who both in regard of bloud and puritty was really her Sister. And she exceedingly desiring the conuersion of her Sister neuer failed in her feruent deuotions which she offred to Allmighty God, beseeching him most feruently that as she and her Sister *Agnes* had liued together in the world in great loue & vnion of mindes that he would now cause betweene them a more perfect coniunction of wils and profession in his holy seruice, most instantly beseeching him to make it appeare to her Sister what a notorious deluder the world is, and how full of discontentment; and that he would change her resolution of carnall maryage, and cause her to embrace the vnion of diuine loue and to take for her spouse the king of glory. Our gratious Lord made no delay to fauour this his poore suppliant and deuout seruant, in this her first petition: sixteen dayes after the conuersion of S. *Clare*, her Sister Agnes inspired of God with a strong and resolu-

te courage gaue a slip & farwell to the world, and came to her Sister to whom discouering the secrets of her heart she told her, she was resolued to serue God in her company: the which she vnderstanding most cordially imbraced her and full of ioy and exultation she sayd vnto her, *my most deare Sister I giue infinite thankes to our Lord* Iesus Christ *that it hath pleased him to heare me, and deliuer me from the affliction I endured for your sake, for I feared that you would haue forsaken the Paradise of virginity, and haue enthralled your selfe to the slauerie of marryage preferring man before God, and earth before heauen.* This noble conuersion of *Agnes* was seconded by as many contradictions of her kindred as that of S. *Clares*: for the diuell by a cruell Alarum and fierce assault went about to disturbe and threaten the totall subuersion of the quiet repose and heauenly consolation of these two virgins, for their kindred hauing vnderstood that *Agnes* had ioyned her selfe to her Sister *Clare* twelue men of their neerest bloud assembled together to assault and wage warre against the two Spouses of *Iesus Christ*: and transported with extreame rage and fume, dissembling neuertheles at the first arriuall their leud intention: shewing them a fauorable countenance: then addressing themselues to the virgin *Agnes* dispairing of all hope to withdraw S. *Clare* from her holy purpose, they demaūded of her wherfore she was retired to that place, and willed her to deliberate and

resolue

resolue to returne with them, to her Fathers
house wherto she answered that she was re-
solued (the grace of God assisting her, to re-
maine with her Sister: which answere one of
them disdaining, full of passion and transported
with choler, tooke her by the haire, and gaue
her many blowes with his feete and fists: then
vsed all his strength to pull her out of the
place which at the length by the help of others
he performed: For taking her in their armes,
they forcibly trayled her out. But this tender
damsell seeing herselfe violently wrested by
those inraged Lyons out of the armes of her
God, began to cry to her Sister: *help me Sister
and permit me not to be separated from our Lord*
Iesus Christ *and your louing company*. Her car
nall friendes trayled along the valley this holy
virgin against her will, and in despight of her
most couragious resistance pulling of her
haire, and renting her clothes. In the meane
while *Saint Clare* vnable to help her Sister by
other meanes had recourse to prayer with a-
bondance of teares, beseeching God to giue a
couragious confidence vnto her Sister that
his diuine fauour defending his faithfull ser-
uant, humaine forces might be ouercome, and
our Lord hear her: For no sooner had she end-
ed her prayer, but the body of the virgin *Agnes*
became so weyghty, that her aduersaries were
constrained to leaue her on the ground, and
albeit so many men and their seruants put all
their forces to lift her vp yet could they neuer

doe it, but called labourers and workemen of the vineyards that wrought thereabouts to assist them, yet their great number no more auailed then the losse: finally all their forces failing, they acknowledged the euident miracle, though in derision saying it is no meruaile though she be so waighty, hauing layne eating of lead all night, wher vpon Seignour *Monaldo* her vncle in extreame choler, lifted vp his Arme to strike her, but presently he was surprised with an extreame paine therin, which did not only torment him for the present but continued a long time after; S. *Clare* after her prayer ariuing, besought her kindred to forbeare in vaine to contend with God, and to leaue to her the care of her Sister who lay as halfe dead. They perceiuing their labour lost to hinder their pious resolution, being exceedingly wearyed, left the two Sisters together: they being departed *Agnes* arose from the ground very ioyfull and comforted in our Lord, for whose loue she had fought and ouercome (in this first conflict) the World, and the Diuell, and her Sister asking her how she felt her selfe, the innocent lambe answered her: that notwithstanding that they buffeted and beat me with their fistes, spurning me with their feet and pulling me by the haire, trayling me through stony wayes, by the diuine help and the merit of your prayers I became insensible to all the euills which I suffered: the World is not worthy nor capable to conceiue

the

the ioy and comfort which theſe heauenly ſoules experienced after theſe trialls and perſecutions, and the breuity of the hiſtorie hath buried in the tombe of ſilence the ſweet and heauenly diſcourſes which paſſed betweene theſe two Siſters who now enioyed but one heart in two bodies: they contemned and laughed at the folly and madnes of worldlings and at the weakenes and impotency of men, that were not able to ſtirre or mooue one yong damſell only: this did a fresh enkindle in their breaſts a moſt intenſe feruour, to ſacrifice and dedicate themſelues to the ſeruice of God, and to caſt aſide all feare and apprehenſion of difficulties whatſoeuer, ſith the diuine maieſty did ſo euidently aſſiſt them rendring them inuincible: this heauenly fauour did make ſerene and calme the ſtorme and tempeſt which was raiſed in the heart: of the chaſt Turtle *Agnes*.

How S. Francis *gaue the habit to B. Agnes, and of the dignitie of the Monaſterie of Saint Damian.*

CHAP. XIV.

Saint Francis inflamed with the loue of Soules, hauing heard the noble conſtancie and generous reſolution of B. *Agnes*, and

the reproches and torments which she had constantly endured of her kindred: moued with a zeale of her soules saluation, inflamed with perfect Charity, and illuminated by God, hastened to the monasterie of *S. Angell of Panso* where she was in the company of her Sister S. *Clare* he layd open vnto her the deceipts and inconstancie of the world; the impurity of carnall pleasures, and the malice and treacherie of the Diuell, exhorting her to forsake riches for voluntary pouerty, to macerate her body by austere mortification of the flesh, brideling the disordinate appetites therof by fasting and disciplines: renouncing her owne will by an intire abnegation of her selfe: whilst this fortunate Damsell was attentiue to these wholesome instructions, the holy ghost wrought so powerfully in her soule by his forcible inspirations, that she was constrained to yeeld her selfe captiue to allmighty God, submitting her selfe to his directions, feeling in her Soule the inflamed dartes of diuine loue, lóging after nothing but heauenly things. Wherfore the Seraphicall Father, to satisfy her desire, cut of her haire, and cloathed her with the habit of the Order like her Sister: leauing her her owne name of *Agnes*, in memorie of the innocent lambe *Christ Iesus*, who offring himselfe in sacrifice to his Father, Redeemed the world with the price of his pretious bloud. And truly *Agnes* lead a life wholy conformable to her mysterious name. For she

Chr. p. 1. l. 8. c. 6. Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1112. §. 24

was meeke as a Lambe, and a true Doue without gall, her innocent life was more Angelical then humaine, she was white and resplendant by her virginall purity, fruitfull in virtue, adorned with all perfection: patient in pennance and sicknes: obedient to her guide and directour S. *Francis*, sacrificing her selfe to her Redeemer as a Paschall Lambe on the tree of the Crosse in labours and austerities of holy Religion and strict Euangelicall pouerty, from the age of 14. yeares til she was deliuered and set free from the Captiuity and bondes of her bodie. But by reason that S. *Clare* and B. *Agnes* her Sister could not find their hearts content, nor enioy with perfect repose the sweet embracements of their heauenly Spouse according to the feruour of their mindes, amongst the Religious Woemen of S. *Benedicts* Order, they were conducted by their directour S. *Francis* to the Church of S. *Damian* ioyning to the City of *Assisium*: Fasting in that place the anchor of their generous resolutions. S. *Damian* is a Church which S. *Francis* laboured much to repaire in the beginning of his conuersion, and where he offered his money to the Chapline for to repaire it. In this same place praying with great effusion of teares he merited to heare the voice of the Crucifix, which three times reiterated vnto him: *Goe Francis and repaire my house, which, as thou seest, is ready to fall*; this is the place wherin S. *Clare* emprisoned and shut vp her selfe from the

Petrus Rodulph fol. 136.

Luc. Wadd. ad annũ 1212. §. 29.

tempestuous turmoiles of this World, building her nest like a siluerd doue in the clifts of this Church, renewing the Colledge of sacred Virgins: giuing a beginning to the Order of poore Ladyes: and being entred into the way of pennance she bruised the hard turfes of her members with the coulter of the Crosse: sowing the seed of all sanctity, becomming a perfect mirrour and bright glasse to direct those in deuotion that were to follow her through this sacred desart and sweet solitude.

How Sainte Clare *by her example and renowne hath drawne many daughters after her,*

CHAP. XV.

THE fame and renowne of S. *Clare* running more swift then any Post, was presently diuulged: so that many damsells in imitation of her, drew neare vnto *Iesus Christ* sacrificing vnto him the inestimable pearle of ther virginity: marryed woemen indeuored to

Chr. p. 1 l. 8. c. 11

liue

liue more chast and virtuosly, gentle woemen and Ladies contemning their faire houses and sumptuous tables shut vp them selues in monasteries, esteeming it a great glorie to liue in strict pennance for the loue of *Iesus Christ*. This Saint was also a spurre vnto men, to excite in them a violent feruour, and principally y outh that beganne to take courage in the contempt of the world, and by example of the frailer sex to fight against the temptations and deceiptfull pleasures of the flesh, many marryed persons with mutuall consent obliged themselues to continency, the men entring into monasteries of men, and woemen into monasteries of Religious Women, the mother induced the daughter to serue *Iesus Christ*, the daughter the mother, one Sister another: and briefly each one by a holy enuy desired to serue God, and to participate of the Angelicall life which was demonstrated vnto them by this holy damsell: in such sort this little plant of S. *Francis*, as a fruitfull tree sprouting forth in to sudry bowes and branches, hath ingendred a copious linage & so great a familie that they couer the whole earth.

For the consolation of those who are denoted to S. *Clare* we will set forth to their view sundry Religious woemen, famous for sanctity who florished in S. *Clares* time. We will giue the preheminence and first place to B. S. *Agnes* who merited the spirituall fauour to be her eldest daughter and her true Sister

Chron. p. 1. l. 8. c. 6. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1253 §. 23. 24.

both

both by bloud, vertue, and Religion: from the time she entred in to the monasterie of S. *Damian* to the day of her death she wore a rough Cilice, subduing her flesh by the asperity ther-of, her ordinarie repast was most commonly bread and water, she was of a dispositiõ very pittifull to all, for her vertue she was a paragon and paterne of all perfection: she hath founded seuerall monasteries in the strict obseruance of the Rule: and in fine hath bin famous for miracles before and after her death B. *Beatrix* Sister to S. *Clare* hauing forsaken the riches of this world at the age of 18. yeares followed to Religion her Mother *Hortulana* and her two Sisters *Clare* and *Agnes* entringin to the monasterie of S. *Damian* wherin she liued Religiously in fasting, watching, and praying, finishing her life with renowne of great Sanctity.

Chron. p. 2. l. 3. c. 33. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1253. S. 15.

B. Sister *Pacifica* neare kinswoman to S. *Clare* who in the world had accompanyed B. *Hortulana* in her deuotion of visiting the holy Land, she was compleat in all virtue, merit and perfection, she was sent by S. *Clare* neare to the valley of *Spoletum* to a place called the *valley of glory* there to erect a monastery according to the intention of S. *Francis* in Regular obseruance, she was highly fauored by God. For being wholy destitute of water where she built her house, she fell to prayer with her Religious, there appeared within the precincts of the conuent a faire great Hinde which open-

Chron. ut a bene Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1213. S. 64.

ing

ing the ground with the hoof of his foot, frō whēce instādy sprung vp a christalin foūtaine, which continueth to this day; many oppressed with sundry maladies are cured by the drinking of this water.

B. Sister *Ayme* cousin of S. *Clare* by whose prayers she forsooke the vanities of the world seruing God in her company in the monasterie of S. *Damian* imitating her rare vertues. Her purity, and innocencie of life, was so admirable that she merited to see *Iesus Christ* at the death of S. *Clare*, when she sayd vnto her, my deare daughter *Ayme* doe you not see the King of glory whō I behold? and immediatly the eyes of Sister *Ayme* were opened and she beheld her heauenly spouse, by whose sight she became more feruent in his holy seruice, persseuering in the exercise of vertue, she in fine reposed in our Lord.

Chron. as aboue Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1213. §. 65.

B. Sister Balbina cousine to S. *Clare* and Sister to the aforesayd Sister *Ayme* in imitation of the Sainte forsaking all vaine and deceipfull delight of this world entring in to the same monasterie where she arriued to so high perfection, that by many miracles her worth and merit was made manifest. This seruant of God was sent by S. *Francis* to found sundry monasteries.

Chron. as aboue Luc. Wadd. ad annū. 1215. §. 36.

B. Sister *Christina* liued in the house of S. *Clare* being her intimate friend and priuie to all her actions when she visited the seraphicall Father S. *Francis* hearing and receiuing from

Chronus aboue Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1213. §. 66.

him the sacred instructions of her conuersion, and in imitation of her, she went to S. *Francis* at our Ladyes of Angels where she receiued the Habit, and in it the space of 44. yeares she followed the steps of the glorious Saint in the perfect obseruance of her holy Rule. B. Sister *Agnes* of *Assisium* endewed with the simplicity of the Doue she merited to see *Christ Iesus* in the forme of a little child, cherishing and dandling S. *Clare* and as she doubted of the verity of the vision she heard a voyce directed to her saying: *In medio eorum sum*: I am in the midst of them, an other time she receiued this admirable fauour to behold the holy Ghost descending vpon the Saint in forme of a fierie beame:

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1213. §. 67.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1213. §. 68.

B. Sister *Francis* was of a most perfect life, she saw our Redeemer in the forme of a beautifull yong child sit in the lapp of S. *Clare* vpon S. *Phillipp* and *Iacobs* day,

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 213. §. 18.

B Sister *Benauenta* liued most Religiously with S. *Clare* the space of 26. yeares: she saw the sacred virgin mother of God cõming to the bed of S. *Clare* the day of her death: louingly embracing her, as wee shall recite heerafter.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1214. §. 74.

B. Sister *Benedict* was a Religious of so great prudence, Sanctity, and perfection, that after that S. *Clare* was receiued in to the heauenly glory by her Spouse: she was elected Abbesse of S. *Damian*: and gouerned that monastery in the obseruance of Pouerty, and being come

to

Digitized by Google

to the ẽd of her dayes, she passed happily to her Creatour being adorned with many miracles. She is buried in the quire of the Church of S. *Clare* in *Assisium*, and she is held in great veneration.

The B. Sister *Balbina*, *Clare* and *Agnes* cossins of S. *Clare*, cõming miraculously to *Barcelone*, with Sister *Anastasia*, Sister *Philipp* of *Assisium*, Sister *Cecilie* of *Spoletum*, and Sister *Lucie* of *Rome*; all true disciples of the diuine *Clare*, as true followers of the vertues and perfections of their holy mother, haue bene adorned with great Sanctity, exemplar life, and many miracles.

B. Sister *Clare* of the noble familie of *Vbaldine* in the life of S. *Clare* gouerned the monasterie of mont-*Celse in Florence*, after that S. *Agnes* was returned to S. *Damian*, for the greater consolation of her Sister; this Lady, before she entred into Religion was marryed to Signour *Galet* one of the most illustrious gentlemen of all *Florence* she hauing considered the sanctity of life of the aforesayd Religious, their manner of life so pleased her as she forsooke the world, and her two children, and shutt vp her selfe in that monasterie, there to serue her heauenly spouse *Christ Iesus*: two of her neeces called *Iane* and *Lucie* Sisters to *Octauian Vbaldine* Cardinall in her company, enrolled themselues amõgst this new florishing company; the Cardinall her nephew through the great loue he bare to his Aunt and his two

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1214. §. 34. annum. 1233. §. 35. annum. 1253. §. 9. annũ. 1315.

Chron. p. 2 l. 1. c. 54. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1261. §. 7. 8. 9. Petr. Rodulp. fol. 137.

Sisters, considering the dangers and perils whervnto this monasterie was exposed, by reason of the continuall wars, he causeda Conuent to be builded within the Citty of *Florence* neare to the Roman gate called *Santa Peter Gatolina*, wherfore the yeare 1261. the Cardinall hauing ordained a solemne procession, he introduced the forsayd Religious to the number of fifty; bringing with them the bones of the Religious men and women who had bene interred in the forsayd monasterie, a Cloke of S. *Francis*, and the Stole wherwith he sung the Ghospell celebrating the Natiuity of our Redeemer, neer to the Cittie of *Crecio*: and a sacred veile which S. *Clare* gaue vnto them at her death: our souueraigne Redeemer by a notable miracle, made manifest how pleasing this procession was vnto him; for all the bells of the Cittie of Florence, did ring of themselues, without any humaine helpe, continuing this melodie, vntill such time as the sacred Reliques were with reuerẽce reposed in their due place: this B. Sister *Clare* reposed happily in our Lord leauing behind her a most sweet Odour of vertues, she is buried in a Sepulcher of marble, twelue yeares after her Sepulcher being opened to burie her neece, therin her bodye was found as entire, faire and sweet as if she had bene but newly dead, and as they lifted her vp in her tombe, she lifted vp her right hand giuing therwith her benediction, to a great number of people there present: two

hundred

hundred yeares after, she was againe found entire, her flesh being as sound and sweet as if she had bene but newly departed without the least corruption of her garments.

B. S. *Agnes* daughter of *Orets* King of *Bohemia* inspired of God tooke the Habit, and made her profession of the austere Rule of S. *Clare*, this Princesse sent a messenger expressely from the Citie of *Prague* to *Assisium*, to render Obedience to S. *Clare*, as to her true mother and Superiour, the B. Sainte returned back vnto her most gratious letters sending vnto her for a token a cord, a veyle and a cup of wood with a dish, wherin she was accustomed to eat and many such small things, which the Princesse accepted with singular deuotion, our Lord wrought many miracles by the sayd things, which haue euer bene conserued in the sayd monasterie with great reuerence: this noble Princesse being adorned with many vertues and miracles, hauing assembled many Religious Women in to diuers monasteries, in fine she left this transitorie life, to goe to enioy the eternall in company of her glorious spouse, she dyed in the Citie of *Prague* the yeare 1285. the Emperour *Charles* the fourth was twise deliuered from death by the intercession of this noble Princesse, wherfore at his death he commanded his Sonne and successour, in the empire Wenceslaus to prosecute her Canonization: but he being hindered by continuall hard and difficile warres, could

Chron. p. 1. l. 8. c. 40. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1354. §. 4.

not execute the pious desire of his father: wherfore she was frustrated of this honour as well as many others, who haue not receiued this from men in the militant Church being most glorious in the triumphant, for a great volume would not be sufficient to set forth the liues of the Religious women of the Order of S. *Clare* renowned for sanctity and miracles.

Chron. p.1. l.8. c.41. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1241. § 4.5.6. Petrus Rodulp. fol. 136.

B. Sister *Helena* of *Padua* florished in great sanctity & perfection in the monastery, which was erected by S. *Francis*, in the Citie of *Padua* where S. *Anthonie* rendred vp his Soule to God: but in as much as the hearts, of the seruants of God, are as Anuils which are alwayes hammered on and liue by the blowes of afflictiō, she was proued by *Iesus Christ* & refined like gold, in the furnace of aduersitie, for she lay in her bed depriued of her corporal health, her sight, and her speech, the space of fifteene yeares, manifesting by exteriour signes, an admirable ioy and alacrity of heart; our Lord reuealed many secrets to this Sainte, which she manifested to the Religious women: who caused them to be carefully written, to record them to posterity: for by signes she could very well expresse to the Religious, what she desired: her body till this present remaineth entire her face and contenance is deuout, young, and beautifull: her teeth fresh and white as is if she were but new dead, when there is any Calamity likely to befall the Citie the body of this

virgin

Digitized by Google

virgin doth ſtirre and moue in her tombe, with a mighty ſound and noiſe: which is the cauſe that the inhabitants of *Padua*, doe immediatly apply themſelues to pious workes, to prayer, faſting, Almesdeedes, & Pennance to appeaſe the wrath of God, and to diuert from their Citie, the warres, Peſt and famine, with other diſaſters; which hang ouer their heades: if you deſire to know, yet more of theſe true diſciples and imitatours of *S. Clare*, who are without number, euen in *S. Clares* life-time; you may pleaſe to looke wher theſe marginall annotations doe direct you.

Luc. Wad. to 1. and 2. Petrus Rodulp. fol. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141.

Monaſteries which were built in S. Clares *time.*

CHAP. XVI.

SAinte *Clare* the little plant of *S. Francis* did alſo ſee the banner of her Order, to flouriſh and fructify, extending and ſpreading her branches ouer all Chriſtendome. *Italie* the earthly Paradiſe of the Church, doth glorie to haue brought forth ſo many goodly ſtockes or Families.

That of *Saint Damian* of *Aſſiſium* is the Lady, queene, and Empreſſe of the whole Order.

Perugia Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1218. § 13.

Perugia is one of the moſt ancient, it was builded by *Agoline* Cardinall Protector of the

Order,

Digitized by Google

Order, who was afterwards Pope, by the name of *Gregorie* the IX.

Aretie. 1215. §.36.

The Citie of *Arette* caused to be built a goodly monasterie which was gouerned by B. *Balbina* (daughter to Seignour *Marsin* of *Carano* cosin to *Sainte Clare*) according to the perfection of the Ghospell and intention of *Saint Francis*.

Padua. 1220. § 5.1231. §.32.

Padua hath had the honour to see *Saint Francis* lay the first stone of the monasterie of the poore *Clares*: *Florence* built the monasterie of *mont-Celse* at the very same time

Florence 1221. §.20.

The Holy Citie *Rome* hath presented vnto her, the goodly monasterie of *Cosme, and Damian*.

Venice. 1234. §. 6.

Venice hath bin adorned with a faire monasterie of poore Clares, enioying *S. Agnes* the Sister of S. *Clare* for her foundresse,

Mantue 1238. *parag.* 26.

Mantua doth glorie that it enioyed a Conuent in *S. Clares* time, and had S. *Agnes*, her Sister for the first Abbesse therof.

Bologna 1152. *parag.* 29

Bologna, solicited by *Arnould* Protector of the Order, who was after Pope *Alexander* the fourth: consecrated a goodly monasterie vnto her.

Spoletum hath done the like, and *Milan*, *Siena*, *Cremone*, *Pise*, *Bergame*, *Alexandrie*, *Ascotie*, and many other Cities.

The Roman Empire hath with great admiration beheld her Eagle, to hatch and produce Eagles, which haue afterwardes nursed and brought vp the most rich and illustrious Prin-

cesses

ceſſes of its Empire, & worthy to haue matched with the higheſt ſouereignty in the world, S. *Agnes* of *Bohemia* before mentioned the yeare 1237. which was more thē fifteene yeares before the death of S. *Clare*, ſent vnto her an honorable Embaſſage, beſeeching her moſt humbly to ſend vnto her ſome Religious Women, of the monaſterie of S. *Damian*, to gouerne and direct many damſells who with languishing deſires aſpired after that heauenly manner of life: she in the meane time cauſing to be erected a Conuent in Prague the Capitall Citie of the Kingdome of *Bohemia*; the fame and renowne of this Princeſſe being diuulged ouer all *Germanie* many monaſteries of poor Clares, were preſently founded both at *Trent*, *Wormes*, *Sefflingen*, *Colen*, *Nurenberg*, *Fullingen*, and in many other places; S. *Clare* to comply to the requeſt of this noble Princeſſe *Agnes* ſent vnto her certaine Religious women of moſt holy and exemplar life, to found and gouerne the ſayd houſe in the ſtrict obſeruance of the Rule and Pouerty both in *Bohemia* and *Germanie*.

Luc. Wad. ad annum 1212. *parag.* 14. 1150. *paragr.* 12.

TWenty yeares before the happy death of S. *Clare*, the Catholick Kingdome with great ioy receiued her Religious, who arriued there by the guide of the Almighty: for the yeare 1233. the Saint cōmanded two of her kinſwomē to wit Siſter *Agnes* and Siſter *Clare* her coſins, to take shipping for *Spaine*, there to found and erect monaſteries; they came vnto *Barcelone* in

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1233. *parag.*

a little Barque without sailes, Oares or sterne passing the dangers and perils of the mediterranean sea, having God only their mariner and guide, the inhabitants of the Citie amazed at the nouelty and admirable accident, and considering the integritie and holy simplicity of these modest and young Religious women, and beholding their poor and contemptibl attire, they receiued them into *Barcelone*, as Angells sent from heauen, giuing vnto them the Church of S. *Ambonie* for their dwelling: in imitation of them, great number of Damsells consecrated the inestimable pearle of their virginity, to the heauenly spouse; professing the same Rule, erecting many monasteries principally in the famous Citie of *Salamanca*, *Valedelsa* *Bourges* and *Zamora*; and other places.

Salmã ca Luc. Wad. ad parag 19 Valode. lsd. 1258 paragr. 65.

Bourge. annum. 1218. parag. 13 idē 1254 parag. 7. Zamore 1229. parag. 32 Wad. ad an 1254 parag. 33 Ierom. Plat. l. 2 c. 27.

The noble flowerdeluce did not only receaue this happy light, but placed it neare vnto her Royall Citie, contributing thervnto of her owne stemme, the more to innoble and augmēt the luster therof: for the Lady Isabella Sister to *S. Lewys* King of France; & the Lady *Iane* daughter to the King of *Nauarre*, contemned the world and dedicated vnto God the deare pledge of their virginity in the Conuent, near *Paris* called long Champ a yeare after the glorious decease of the Saincte: wherby wee may gather that the sayd Conuent was built before her death, the like honour hath bene afforded to the monasteries of *Rhemes*, *Bordeaux*. *Mons-Pelliere*, and many other places.

Of

Of diuers great Princesses who became Religious Woemen of the Order of sainte Clare.

CHAP. XVII.

NOT without great reason may wee sing with the kingly Prophet, warbling this melodious note, *Adducentur regi virgines post eam*: Wee know very well that according to the letter this is spoken of the sacred mother of God, who by pronomination or excellencie hath acquired this Epithet of honour and sublime prerogatiue to be the virgin of virgins: for that she was the first who made that noble Vow giuing therby a rare example, to all vertuous damsells, to present to the heauenly King their virginall purity, a Iewell of inestimable worth (till then vnknowne in the world) by that generosity to purchase the noble crowne of Virginity. I doubt not but the same may be diuulged to the prayse of the refulgēt Sunne of virgins in her time B.S. *Clare*, sith so many millions of deuout Soules with great ioy and alacrity of spirit, haue dedicated themselues to God: and admiring the resplendent Rayes of her supereminent graces, haue contēned the pleasures of this World, to imitate the perfections of this noble Lady: vn-

Psalm. 44.

der whose instructions they voluntarily enrolled themselues: taking her for their watch-Tower, and bright torch, which should lighten and direct them: whilst they flote on the surging waues of this dangerous and vnconstant Sea, yea many Princesses haue refused the most honorable and aduantagious allyances in the world, for to bind themselues, according to the example of her pouertie, to an austere life, humility and other mortifications.

It will not be from our purpose to produce some of the greatest Ladies of the world, who haue made themselues more famous and illustrious by embraceing this poore recluse life, then by their noble extraction.

Chron. p. 1. l. 3. c. 40. Luc Wad. ad annum. 1234. parag. 4

B. *Agnes* aboue mentioned daughter to the King of *Bohemia* was promised in marriage, to the Emperour *Fredericke* the second. but she refused to consent, dedicating her virginity vnto God in a monasterie at Prague of the Order of S. *Clare* which she had erected, the Emperour vnderstanding that his Espouse, had forsaken the world: at the first incounter, he was much disquyeted, but after reflecting that she had not forsaken him to ioyne her selfe to any other Prince, but for *Iesus Christ*, before who all the Kings of the earth are as wormes poore, naked, and miserable, he rested satisfyed, and well edifyed. Her Father intending to assigne a good pension, and rent to the monasterie of his daughter to prouide for the

temporall

temporall neceſſities therof, ſhe reſiſted ther-vnto, very conſtantly: deſiring to liue and dye poore, and to be mantained of Almes, conformable to the Rule: obſeruing very exactly the intention of the Seraphicall Father S. *Frances* concerning the vow of Pouerty: the daughters of many Kings, Princes, Dukes, Earles and other great Lords in *Germanie*, haue forſaken the world, and the vanities therof following the footſteps of S. *Clare* and this noble Princeſſe *Agnes*.

I*ane* daughter to the king of *Nauarre* more eſteeming the Kingdome of heauen then of the earth, conſecrated her ſelfe to God, in the monaſterie of *Long champ* to the admiration of many. I*ſabella* Siſter to S. *Lewys* King of France ſought and required in Marriage of Prince *Conrard* ſonne to the Emperour *Fredericke*, choſe rather to ſacrifice the puritie of her Royall Lilly, and the vermillion Roſe of her virginity to her heauenly ſpouſe, then to blemish her Chriſtaline purity: Wherfore the yeare 1254. renoūcing the vaine pomps of the world, deſpiſing all earthly Diademes, she reclused her ſelfe in the monaſterie of *Long-chāp*: With ſuch feruour of ſpirit and ſanctity of life, in regular obſeruance; that God hath ſealed her holines with a number of miracles:

Luc. Wad. ad annum 1254 paragr. 42.

annum. parag. 33 idem 1260 parag. 60.

B*lanche* her neece daughter to *Philipp* King of France, did in like ſort dedicate her virginity vnto God, in the ſame monaſterie the yeare 1316.

Chron. p. 2. l. 7. c. 32.

Chron. p.2.l.8. c.49. Ierom. Plat.l. 2.c.27.

The Lady *Sancie* queene of *Sicilie* and *Hierusalem* a few monthes after the death of *Robert* her Husband cõtemning all worldly greatnes, and Courtly honour, renouncing all, she shrouded her selfe in a monasterie of poore Clares in the Cittie of *Naples*; where this Princesse was so great a louer of humility, as she besought the most B. Father Generall of the Order, that he would please strictly to prohibit all her Sisters in Religion, that none of them might call her queene or Lady *Sancie* but simply Sister, the same common amongst all Religious.

Wad. ad annum. 1219. parag 6.

Kunegunde daughter to *Andrew* King of *Hungarie*, and Sister to S. *Elizabeth* the widdow; having liued in matrimonie the space of forty yeares with *Boleslaus* the chast King of Poland, both of them keeping their virginall puritie vnspotted; after the death of her Husband she became Religious of the Order of S. *Clare*; she dyed the yeare 1292. and was famous for many miracles.

Luc. Wad. as aboue.

Her Sister *Ioleine* after the death of her Husband *Boleslaus* the pious Duke of *Cracouie* and Prince of *Poland* vndertooke the same course of life.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1254. parag 37 1268. p. 4. 5. 6.

Salome daughter to the Duke of *Cracouie* and Sister to *Boleslaus* the chast, hauing liued many yeares with her Husband *Coloman* King of *Galatie*, preseruing the integrity of her virginity, in the state of matrimonie, after the death of her Husband, she receiued the sacred veile,

from

from the Bishopp of *Cracouie* and became a poore Clare: her sanctity was made manifest by many miracles which God wrought after her death. *Petr. Rodul. fol. 141.142*

Helena daughter to *Alphonsus* the third King of *Portugall* became Religious of the Order of S. *Clare*: she was indowed with rare humility and singular charity towards the sick. One day a sickly Sister desiring some cherries, she went and gathered some greene from the tree (it being too timely to haue ripe ones) and presented them in an instant wholy ripe to her sick Sister who eating of them recouered her perfect health; she ended her life adorned with rare perfection and was illustrious for miracles. *Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1259. p. 18.*

Constancia wife to *Peter* King of *Arragon* and neece to the Emperor *Fredericke* the second, after the death of the King her Husband; she embraced with great feruour the life of a Poore Clare.

The same course haue imbraced *Euphemia* daughter vnto *Rodulphus* the Emperour: *Agnes* daughter vnto *Lewys* the Emperour *Blanch* daughter to the King of *Nauarre*: *Magdalene* Sister to *Francis* the most mighty Duke of *Britteine*: *Ione* and *Marguerite* daughters to *Godfrey* the most illustrious duke of *Brabant*; *Marguerite* and *Agnes* daughters to *Frederick* Duke of *Lorraine*: *Paula* the wife of *Iohn Francis* of *Gonzago* First Marquis of *Mantua*. *Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1290. parag. 21*

Philip of *Gueldres* of the noble and Royall

house

house of *Bourbon* Ducheſſe of *Lorraine* and *Bar*, &c. after the deceaſe of *René* King of *Sicile* her husband she applyed her ſelfe to the workes of piety and deuotion, and in fine wholy forſooke the world, the more freely to ſerue her Creator, entring in to the Conuent of the Poore Clares of *Ponta Mouſſon*, obſeruing exactly the Rule, the ſpace of 27. yeares, in great feruor of ſpirit and ſanctity of life, neuer admitting of the leaſt diſpenſation, she rendred her happy ſoule into the handes of her Creator the yeare 1547. and of her age 85. leauing behinde her a fragrant Odour of her ſweet virtues, and the reputation of a great Sainte.

The Ladye *Marguerite* of *Auſtrie* daughter to *Maximillian* the II. Emperour and to *Marie* Siſter to *Philip* the II. King of Spaine; Siſter to *Rodulphus*, and *Mathias* Emperours, and to *Albertus* the Arch-Duke of Auſtrie, and Duke of Brabãt, &c. Being ſought in marriage of ſũdry great Princes, notwithſtanding she contemning all worldly greatnes and terrene pomp, choſe rather to be an abiect in the houſe of God conſecrating her ſelfe to his diuine ſeruice in a monaſterie of S. *Clare* where the rigour of the Rule is moſt exactly obſerued. Truly this is a rare & notable example, to behold ſo great a Lady and Princeſſe, to humble and debaſe her ſelfe, to ſo poore and abiect a habit, contenting her ſelfe with a Cell of 7. foote long, and 5. broad, tying her ſelfe to continuall faſting, and to many ſtrict obediences and hard

mortifi-

mortifications: neuertheles this noble Lady of Austria doth esteeme her selfe more honored by this vocation, which by the inspiration of God she hath vndertake, & bound her selfe vnto wherin she laboureth to become more illustrious by the greatnes of her eminent vertues, most curiously elaborated and perfectly ingrauen in her soule, then by the splendour of her noble ancestours.

Of the humilitie of sainte Clare.

CHAP. XVIII.

PRofound humility was the first assured stone, and foundation layd by this prudent virgin, in her beginning in Religion, after she had begunne to labour in the way of God: being not ignorant how this virtue in perfection, is the Regent and gouernesse of good workes, the treasurer of merits, the foundation of all virtue: she was not puffed vp with the smoke of vaine glory, (a poison most easily swallowed, and fed by good workes themselues) for being Foundresse of so many monasteries, and mother of an innumerable number of Daughters: for she gouerned by holy Obedience, trembling vnder the burthen of vaine worldly dignities: truly it is a great

Vaine Glory a pleasant and dangerous poison.

Digitized by Google

folly to glory in honour, and Superiority, for which wee shall one day pay a deare price, sith that *of him that hath receiued much, much shall be required*: and as all proceedes from God so should all be referred to him: and he doth not deserue to receiue any new benefit, who maleuolously doth attribute to him selfe, what totally apertaineth vnto God, all proceeding from the inexhaustible foutaine of his immense liberality: She was very dexterous & discreet, in concealing the heauēly fauours, and that in so sweet, and innocent a maner, as it was most remarkable: making not the least shew of what had happened. If Obedience or charity did vrge her to solace the afflicted, after she had prayed to our Lord with great feruor imploring his assistance, she sent them to her mother Sister *Hortulana* or to some other Religious womē conspicuous for Sainctity, that to them might be attributed the cure and whē any one would referre the honour to her, she vterly denyed it, vsing this ordinarie sleight: saying, if I could cure the sicke, I would solace my selfe, for I ly languishing so many yeares but cannot dye, would I (thinke you?) be so inconsiderate as to cure others, and permitt my selfe to remaine and perish in my miserie? after this sort *humble Clare* the more she was adorned with Celestiall gifts, graces, and miracles, the more she still depressed and humbled her selfe; to the descent of her owne nothing, keeping all these heauenly fauours

Luc. 12.

The humilitie of sainte Clare.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1253 §. 25. 1251. §. 24.

She attributes her miracles to others

locked

locked vnder the key of humble modestie, within the sacred Closet of her heart, neuer desiring of other Herauld to publish her perfections, then a most profound silence, stifling vaine glory which doth ly hid in the very center of the soule, and often doth lurcke vnder the most refined spirituallity, if infatigable diligence be not vsed to expulse it. Her greatest ambition was to be seruant of seruants, at the feete of all, and the lowest of all; and for no honour which was euer done vnto her did she euer digresse from this humility wherin her heart was settled: her attire was poore, and humble, her exercises were abiect lowly and contemptible, and finally her speech was deuoid of all selfe-conceipt reputeing her selfe as a worme of the earth. She disdained not to execute the office of a seruant washing of the feete of her Religious and seruing them at the table, when as she commanded any thing it was with great repugnance, desiring rather to obay then to command, she exhibited to the sicke all kind of seruice how vile or abiect soeuer cleansing the loathsomest and fowlest immundicities, she often washed the Feete of the lay Sisters when they returned home from begging and wipeing them she kissed them with great deuotion: one time it chanced that washingone of their Feet which she embraced but the Sister refusing that act of humility withdrew her Feet, but she did it so rudely that she gaue she Sainte therwith a great dash

Chr. p. 1. l. 8. c. 7. Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1215. §. 38.

on the face, yet so farre was the virgin from being offended therwith that on the contrary she mildly tooke the Foot of the Sister aagaine and kissed the sole therof: thus did this true Espouse of *Christ Iesus* accomplish the doctrine of her Maister and the example which he left when he washed the Feete of his Apostles. An act of great note which happened in her presence doth shew the great reckoning she made of humilitie; An English Freer Minor, and Doctour in diuinity preaching at the Monasterie of S. *Damian* in the presence of S. *Clare*, and of B. Brother Giles the third disciple of S. *Francis*, a Lay brother by profession, and indewed with an admirable simplicitie and sanctity of life, he desired (as a zealous friēd of humility) to make tryall of the sayd virtue in this Preacher, therfore in the middest of his Sermon he willed him to be silent for that he himselfe intended to Preach: immediatly the diuine gaue ouer and Brother Giles with great feruour propounded most high and sublime matters to the great astonishment of his audience, then turning him selfe to the diuine he willed him to prosecute his discourse, wherunto he obayed: which S. *Clare* beholding exclaimed with ioye and exultation: this day is fulfilled one of the cheefe desires of our Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* who often reiterated saying: I desire my Religious should be so humble that a Doctour in Diuinity intending to preach should giue ouer at the word of a

Ioan. 15.

Chron. p. 1. l. 10. c. 12.

simple

simple lay Brother and giue him the place: I assure you my deer Sisters this preacher hath more edifyed me then if he had rayſed the dead.

Of the perfect obedience of S. Clare.

CHAP. XIX.

THe glorious Virgine S. *Clare* had in singular recommendation the virtue of holy Obedience producing the example of the ſonne of God of whō the Doctour of the Gentiles ſayth, *Ieſus Chriſt* hath annihilated himſelfe taking the forme of a Seruant becōming obedient vnto death, yea the death of the croſſe ſubmitting himſelfe to ſo hard an obedience as to vndergoe the moſt ſcandalous ignominious and painfulleſt death in the world: the little and humble ſeruant of God *Clare* hauing vowed obedience to S. *Francis* did allways perſeuerantly bow vnder the yoake of his cōmandement in moſt plyable and obedient manner, reſpecting the perſon of God in him and eſteeming him as the interpretour of the diuine will: she vnfolded to him the motions of her heart with an Angelical purity liſtening attentiuely to his inſtructions and exactly fulfilling his commandes as if they had benedi-

nine Oracles: three yeares after her conuersion through great humility she desired to obay rather then command, to be a subiect rather then Superiour, to serue amongst the handmaides of *Iesus Christ* rather then to be serued: she most humbly besought the Seraphicall Father to release and free her from the chardge and title of Abbesse, and to make her the lowest in the house, whervnto he would in no sort consent: but commanded her for obedience and charity to continue the same: she knowing very well that to obay is requisit to haue feete to runne wings to fly and handes to execute whatsoeuer the Superiour doth ordaine bowed her shoulders to the burthen and accepted the chardge denying her owne will: which ingendred in her soule more feare then presumption wherby she became rather subiect then free. S. *Francis* sayd one day vnto her: my daughter prepare your selfe to goe whither soeuer I will send you, she made answere with great humility & submission as a true child of obedience, Father dispose of me as you please I am yours I haue consecrated my will vnto God, it is no more my owne, I am ready to goe whither soeuer you thinke conuenient: a noble sentence worthy of S. *Clare*, and to be well imprinted in the heart of euery Religious person, reducing to their minde how on the day of their Profession by the vowe of obedience they haue so dispoiled themselues of their owne will that they haue no more right thervnto: and if they

Chron. p. 1. l. 8. c. 7. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1215. §. 28.

Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1212. §. 32.

call

cal it backe vseing it at their owne liberty they are proprietaries before God vsurping by an irregular act what they had consecrated to God by their Profession.

Of the pouerty of Sainte Clare, *and her great zeale to this virtue.*

CHAP. XX.

OVR Redeemer *Christ Iesus* intending to lay the foundation of the new Hierusalem descending from heauen: in his admirable sermon on the mountaine began by the recommendation of Pouerty, B. are the Poore of spirit: giueing her the first place, as to her that beggetteth all other virtues, for truely Monasticall Pouerty doth quite banish and take away all cares and incombrances which doe depresse a man: it is the direct way to heauen, the expulser of sadnes, nurse of peace: and the beesome which doth cleanse the soule from all transitorie cares: finally it is the sollid foundation of all Euangelicall perfectiō taught and practised by our Redeemer: in whose handes are all the boundes of the earth, and yet he had not one foote of ground where to retire him selfe: vpon this perfection hath the Catholick Church beene grounded by the A-

postles

postles professed enemies to riches, so as the first and principall of them all making open & publicke profession of this Pouerty sayd, gold and siluer I haue not. Perfection wheron our Seraphicall Father hath securely pited his Order, cherrishing her as a most noble Orient pearle stileing her his Mother, Mistresse, Ladye, and Queene: vpon this perfection his holy disciple and eldest daughter S. *Clare* would plant and establish her Religion: for in the beginning of her conuersiō she caused her whole inheritance and patrimonie to be sold reserving nothing to herselfe: dispoiling her selfe of all transitorie riches to sacrifise them at the foote of the Crucifix, hauing in this sort exteriourly abandoned the World, and interiourly inriched her soule she ranne after her beloued far more lightly being freed from the burthen of terrene things: she contracted so strict an amitie with holy pouerty and became so enamoured therof, as she would enioye nothing but naked *Iesus*, neither would she permitt her daughters to possesse any other riches, and with this Euangelicall trafficke she purchased the inestimable treasure of Celestiall Beatitude in lieu of all other things which she had sold, acknowledging that the same could in no sort be enioyed together with the distraction and occupation of temporall things: instructing her Religious she would often say vnto them that their company would be then gratefull vnto God when they were most rich in Pouerty,

and

Digitized by Google

and would be conserued most firme and stable if it were allwayes fortifyed and inuironed with the rampiers and strong bulwarkes of pouerty: she allso admonished her beloued daughters in *Christ Iesus* to conforme themselues to him lying poore in the bed of pouerty, and being but newly borne was by the most sacred virgin his Mother layed in the manger: and in his life possessed nothing liuing of continuall allmes, and dyed wholy naked on the Crosse. His deuout soule receaued with great ioye and comfort the peeces and morcells of bread which the Religious men brought from the doores: hauing demaunded it for the loue of God, shewing no such content at the sight of whole loaues: She would neuer heare of rētes, reuenewes, pensions, or any stable possessions. Pope Gregorie the ninth louing this Espouse of *Iesus-Christ*, with a fatherly affection, arriuing at *Assisium* the yeare 1228. for the Canonization of the Seraphicall Father *S. Francis* before he made his entrie into the Citty he went to visitt his deer daughter *Clare*, and amongst other discourses he laboured to perswade her to admitt of rents, alleadging the great vicissitude and alterations of times, warres, incursion of Enemies, and pilladge of Countries, the coldnes of Peoples deuotion towards the poore of *Iesus Christ*, the pouerty and miserie of the world; wherfore he iudged it conuenient she should be established in some security by rents and possessions, he proferring him

selfe to bestow them vpon her; but all these waighty reasons and faire offers ioyned with the soueraigne authority of so great a Prelate were not of force to make her consent or chãge her vndaunted resolution, wherfore the Pope sayd vnto her my daughter if you feare to breake or infringe your vowe I will absolue you from that obligation; but the couragious virgin answered him presently with great profoũd humility most holy Father I shall be euer glad to receaue from your holines the absolution of all my sinnes; but I neuer desire to be absolued from following the pathes and steps of my Redeemer *Christ Iesus*: many Prelats and great persons came to visitt her who counseiled her to mitigate her Rule in the point of pouerty and austerity, but after she had well wayghed the affaire and recommended the sequell to God she fully resolued to obserue the first Rule which had bene giuen her by the Seraphicall Father S, *Francis* considering that our Lord would giue sufficient strength and forces to those whom he should call to this B. state and happy condition to vndergoe it: to conclude: all her care and cheefe studie was in all the degrees of perfect pouerty to conforme her selfe to naked *Christ* crucifyed, so that no terrene thing should be able to separate the poore virgin from her beloued nor impeach her from running after the sweete Odour of his perfumes.

How

How Saincte Clare *demaunded of Pope Innocent the forth the priuiledge of pouerty.*

CHAP. XXI.

Chron. p.1.l.3. c.8. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1251. §.7.

MAny priuiledges are dayly sought for and demaunded of the soueraigne Bishopp, but neuer hath the like to this bene heard of which the prudent virgin and humble suppliant *Clare* did seeke for: for desiring to intitle her Religion with the title of pouerty, she demaunded of Pope Innocent the fourth the priuiledge of pouerty: to haue pouerty for her patrimony pouerty for her consolation, pouerty for the solace of all her distresses and pouerty for the fundamentall stone of her Order: his holines who had neuer heard such a demaund or bene presented with the like supplication amazed at her generous resolution and admirable constancy auouched publickly before the Cardinalls, and the whole Court: that the like priuiledge had neuer bene demaunded of the Sea Apostolick: neuertheles he highly extolled her magnanimous requeste: and since she desired with her daughters to lead an Apostolicall life he graunted her suit and to the end a new & vnaccustomed fauour might comply with a new requeste the Pope with great content writt with his owne hand

the first letter of priuiledges, watering it with teares of deuotion.

The Bull of Pope Innocent the fourth how the Religions *of* Sainte Clare *may not be constrained to receaue rents or possessions.*

INnocent Bishop seruant of the seruants of God to his deerly beloued daughters in *Iesus Christ* Clare Abbesse and the other Sisters of the monastery of *S. Damian* at *Assisium*, as well present as to come health and Apostolicall benediction; seing that it is manifest that you haue sold all your goods to bestow them on the poore the beuer to renounce the thoughts and desires of temporall things desiring to be wholy dedicated vnto God, and that you haue a firme resolutiō not to hold in what sort soeuer any possessions or immoueable goods following in all things the foot steps of him who for vs was made poore the way the truth, and the life; neither is the necessity and want of temporall things able to terrifie you from this firme purpose for so much as the left hand of your heauenly spouse is vnder your head to sustaine the great feeblenes of your bodye the which you haue subiected vnto the law of the spiritt with great feruour of charity

that

that Lord who feedeth the birds of the air and cloatheth the hearbs of the feilds will reward you with himselfe in eternity: when his right hand shall embrace you gloriously in his perfect vision. Mooued heerwith as allso for that you demaund of vs with great humility that wee would confirme vnto you with our Apostolicall graunt: the sayd resolution which you haue taken to follow the most high pouerty wee yeeld vnto you by the tenour of these present letters, that you may not be constrained by any whosoeuer he be, to haue, take, or retaine any temporall possessions: and if any mayd would not or could not keepe this Rule let her not remaine with you but be straight way sent vnto some other place: also wee ordaine and forbid that no person of what quallity or condition soeuer he may be, be so bold as to trouble your monasterie: and if any person Ecclesiasticall or secular knowing this our constitution and confirmation, attempt in what sort soeuer to doe contrary to the same, and after haning bene three diuers times reprehended and aduertised, doth not amend and make due satisfaction for his fault, he shall be depriued of his office, dignity, and honour: and that one may knowe such a person allready to be condemned for his wickednes by the iust iudgment of God, he shall be cut of from the holy communion of all faithfull Christians and shall be guilty of the diuine vengeance at the last iudgment: but those who loue you all in

Christ Iesus, and your Order, specially the monastery of *Saint Damian*; the peace of God be with them, to the end they may receaue the fruit of their good workes and may find the recompence of eternall beatitude at the day of the rigorous and last iudgment.

Of the great prouidence of God towards S. Clare.

CHAP. XXII.

IT is a notable draught and signe of the singular prouidēce of God that so many poore Religious not reseruing any temporall goods nor so much as the freedome or power to wish or desire againe those goodes which they haue renounc·d and abandoned by an expresse and voluntary vowe: wholy relying on the succour of the diuine prouidence, doe yet neuer want nourrishment or necessarie maintenance for this life: It is a couenant and compromisse of mutuall obligation, (according to the saying of S. *Francis*,) made betweene God and the Religious: to wit that the Religious for their part should forsake and abandone all: and our Lord for his part should maintaine and nourish them; and that not in the nature that a Master doth his seruants: but as a Father doth his Children: it appertaines to the

soue-

soueraigne prouidence of God, to prouide the of all things necessarie: which his pietie performeth with such assiduous care, as if he tooke a singular delight therein. On this diuine prouidence the prudent virgin *Clare* hath founded her Order, Religion, and Familie. It shall not be from our purpose, to record two miracles, which did spring from the merits of this zealous louer of pouerty. One day, it chanced, that there was not in all the Monasterie one loafe of Bread, and the houre of dinner being come, the Sainte called the *Dispensier* which was Sister *Cecilie* of *Spoletum*, and appointed her to diuide the loafe in two, and to send halfe to the Religious Brothers, who serued without, and reserue the other halfe for themselues: whereof she should make fifty portions, because there were so many Religious: and that she should lay them on the table of pouerty: wherevnto the *Dispensier* answered: that the miracles of *Iesus Christ* were needfull to make so many portions forth of so small a quantity of bread, but S. *Clare* replyed, my daughter doe what I bid you. The Religious woman went presently to effect the commaund of her Abbesse: who went to prayer with all her Religious, presenting their vowes and teares to their heauenly Spouse, and immediately, by the diuine goodnes, the small peeces of bread did so augment in the handes of the *Dispensier* that cutt them, that they suffised for the refection of the Communitie. This was a stroake

of

of the paternall prouidence of God, who was in this sort delighted to consolate those who serued him, with so free a hart. It happened an other time that the seruants of *Iesus Christ* wanted oyle, so that they had not sufficient to dresse meate for the sicke: S. *Clare* being aduertised of this necessity, tooke a pott which (as Mistresse of humility) she washed with her owne handes: then sent it to the Turne-wheele: to the end a brother might goe begg some for the loue of God: the B. Damsell recommending this want to the prouidence of God: the Religious brother being called found the sayd pott miraculously full of excellent oyle: wherfore thinking that the Sisters had called him without necessity, murmuring to himselfe, he sayd, these Sisters knowe not what they would haue, their pott being full of pure oyle. God did in this sort often prouide by extraordinary meanes for the necessities of his poore handmaydes by the intercession of their prudent Mother.

Of the anſtere mortification faſtes and abſtinence of S. Clare.

CHAP. XXIII.

ALthough the Bodye hath beene giuen vnto the ſoule for a deer and inſeparable companion to be her ſubiect and without reſiſtance in all things to obay her will; notwithſtanding after the ſinne of our firſt Father, ſhe is become rebellious, and violating the bandes of amity is turned into a fierce and cruell enemy, refuſing to be ſubiect to any but her diſordered appetites, ſeeking eaſe and delight in ſenſuall pleaſures, flying mortification abſtinence and pennance and all acts of virtue this tirant doth euer wage warre againſt reaſon precipitating her in to many vnworthy acts; wherfore it is requiſite to enaſtiſe the rebellious flesh, humbling and ſubduing her by auſterity, pennance, mortification and ſtripes, vſing her in Nature of a ſlaue teaching her to obay the commaundements. Of reaſon; in this ſort did S. *Clare* triumph, for ſhe was ſo ſeuere and in ſome ſort cruell to her owne bodye: as to her deadly enemie, her life was no life but a life of continuall faſting, neuer deſiſting for her infirmity or any other occaſion how vrgent ſoeuer. She cloathed her innocent body

Digitized by Google

with one single habitt all patched and a cloake of grosse cloath rather to couer her body then to defend it from the importunities of the seasons, neuer wearing stockings nor shoos to defend her selfe from the cold; this Espouse of *Iesus Christ* inuented new wayes to cloath her selfe with the liueries of her spouse for she caused to be made a tunick of hoggs haire which she wore next her skinne, this was not sufficient to asswage the heate of her loue nor satiat the desire she had of doing pennance for she wore besides a Cilice made of horse haire interlaced with hard knotts, which once Sister *Agnes* of *Assisium* borrowed of her with great importunity but hauing experienced the sharpnes therof she restored it to S. *Clare* more readily then she had ioyfully borrowed it, admiring how so tender a body could support it; her ordinary bed was the bare ground vsing some times to lye vpon the cuttings of vignes and a block of wood for her bolster or pillow; she rent her body with cruell and hard disciplines; by these feruorous austerities subduing the flesh and preseruing the lustre of her virginall purity: but in regard that the rigorous life wherwith she afflicted her body brought her to sicknes, the holy Father S. *Francis* commaunded her to lye vpon chaffe: the rigour of her abstinence in her fastes was such that she could not maintaine her body in life so little did she eat, wherfore it was apparent that she was sustained by diuine virtue: when she had

her

her health she fasted from all Saints to Christmas and the whole Lent with bread and water except the Sundayes: and which is more admirable three dayes in the weeke to wit, Munday Wednesday and Fryday in the Lent she eat nothing at all, and the better to dispose her selfe for the fastes commaunded by the Church on the Eues of the sayd fastes she eat nothing but bread and water; wherfore wee need not wonder if such a rigour so long continued bred many infirmities in this holy virgin extenuating her forces, and ouerthrowing the naturall vigour and health of her body, the deuout Religious daughters of this holy mother had exceeding compassion of her bitterly lamenting the vntimely death which she voluntarily procured her selfe, for remedy wherof S. *Francis* and the Bishop of *Assisium* forbad her those three dayes of fast which eue ry weeke she inflicted on her selfe, and commaunded her not to passe one day without taking at the least anounce and a halfe of bread to conserue life; and allbeit such greeuous afflictions of the body doe accustome to breed allsosome affliction to the heart, yet in her it produced a contrary effect, for her countenance was euer mild and ioyfull in all her austerities, so as she seemed to haue no feeling of them or to feare no inconuenience by them, setting light by all corporall afflictions which sufficiently demonstrated that the spirituall ioye wherwith she was interiourly nourished appeared exte-

Digitized by Google

riour y in her holy face ; becauſe the true loue of the heart maketh pennance ſweet and eaſy.

How Saint Francis *and* Sainte Clare *made their refection together and of an admirable rapt.*

CHAP. XXIV.

THE chaſt and vnſpotted Turtle *Clare* was ſingularly deuoted and affected to the Church of Portiuncula it being the place where she had giuen the tickett of defyance to the world before the Alltar of the ſouueraine Queene of heauen and earth conſecrating her ſelfe to *Ieſus Chriſt* her immortall Spouſe ; therfore she feruently deſired to viſit once more this ſacred chappell whervnto *ſaint Francis* condeſcended not without the diuine inſpiration who intended to worke great matters by this holy conference. This holy virgin accompanyed with ſome of her Religious Siſters entred into this holy temple, wher a long time she pre ented her prayer vnto God, yeelding him thankes for the fauours which she had receaued in that place , she ſaluted her Aduocatreſſe the glorious Queene of Angells; and viſited all the Alltars S. *Francis* going forth of the place, ordained a napkinne to be ſpread

on

on the ground with a slender portion according to his pouerty. for the first messe he began so highly to discourse of diuine mysteries that both himselfe S. *Clare* and all the Religious men and woemen there present were rapt in extasie, their eyes elenated on high and their soules in a manner transported to heauen: at the same instāt the Cittizens of *Assisium* beheld the house of our Lady of Angells to burne and all the bordering place and mountaine adiacent but aboue all the fire ouer the monasterie seemed most raging and vehement wherfore they hastened from all sides to quench it, but comming to the place they found neither fyre nor flame but only of the holy ghost whom they considered and acknowledged in the countenances and aspects of those whom they found yet sitting absorbed in God with S. *Clare*, and her companions, from whence awaking and perceauing the heauenly grace they tasted little els, being allready saciated and full of this spirituall food: thus euery one retired yeelding thankes to God, who doth present and afford himselfe to those who doe vnite themselues to him by Charity S. *Clare* returned to her Monastery of S. *Damian* wher her Religious receaued her with singular consolation beeause they feared S. *Francis* would haue sent her to found a Monasterie in some other place as he had done to her Sister *Agnes* to whom he gaue the gouuernement of the Monastery neer *Florence* and this they apprehended the more for that he

had warned her to be ready to goe whither soeuer he should thinke fitting.

The coppie of a letter which S. Agnes *writt from* Florence *to her Sister* Sainte Clare, *and to all the Religious of* S. Damian.

CHAP. XXV.

TO the venerable and beloued Lady and Mother in our Lord *Iesus Christ Clare* & to all her Conuent humble Sister *Agnes* the least of the disciples of *Iesus Christ* and of yours, commendeth her selfe vnto you all and prostrate at your feet doth yeeld you all submission and deuotion, wishing vnto you what is most pretious from the most high king of kings, to the end that all nature that hath bene created of God doe acknowledge it selfe to be such as it can not persist of it selfe in its owne essence the diuine prouidence most prudently permitteth that when any one esteemeth him selfe to be in prosperity then is he drowned & plunged in aduersity: this I tell you my most deer mother that you may knowe what affliction and extreame heauines possesseth my spirit being so tormented that hardly can I speake

and

and this becauſe I am corporally ſeparated frō you and my holy Sisters with whom I hoped to haue happily liued and dyed in this world ſo far is this my greefe from slacking that it continually increaſeth which as it had a beginning ſo doe I beleeue it will find no end in this world; for it is continuall and familliar vnto me that I greatly feare it will neuer forſake me. I was perſwaded this life and death ſhould be a like without power of any ſeparation vpō earth amongſt them who haue one ſame conuerſation and life in heauen and muſt haue one ſame ſepulture, them I ſay whom one ſame equall and naturall profeſſion and one ſame loue hath made Sisters, but ſo farre as I can ſee being abandoned and afflicted on each ſide, I am much miſtakē O my holy Sisters, I beſeech you to be reciprocally greeued with me and let vs weep together being aſſured that you ſhall neuer experience any dolour like vnto that which I now feele in being ſeparated frō them with whom *Ieſus Chriſt* had conioyned me, this greef tormenteth me inceſſantly this fier burneth my heart continually ſo that being on each ſide afflicted I know not what to thinke neither doth any hope remaine but to be aſſiſted by your prayers that almighty God eaſing this affliction may make it tollerable vnto mē: O my moſt gratious Mother what ſhall I doe, and what ſhall I ſay, ſith I know not that euer I ſhall ſee you more or likewiſe my Sisters that it were lawfull for me to vtter

vnto

vnto you the conceipts of my soule as I would desire, or that I could open my heart vnto you vpon this paper then should you see the liuely and continuall dolours that torment me, my soule burneth interiourly being afflicted with an incessant fyer of loue, and my hart groaneth sigheth and lamenteth with desire of your presence, myne eyes can not haue their fill of weeping and albeit I seeke for some consolation against this bitternes yet can I find none but euery thing turneth in to greefe, and much more when I consider the meanes to see you I am intirly steeped in these anguishes, hauing none that can comfort me in this life, but that I receaue a little consolation from the liberall hand of our Sauiour *Iesus Christ* which causeth me to beseech you all to giue thankes vnto his diuine Maiesty, for this fauour and mercy extended towards me: and for that through his grace, I find such concord, peace, and charity, in this conuent as by words can not be expressed, these Sisters hauing receaued me with exceeding loue and deuotion, yeelding me Obedience with extraordinary promptitude and reuerence, they all with one accord recommend themselues to our Lord *Iesus Christ*, and to you my Sister, and to all the Sisters of the monasterie, and I recommend my selfe and them to your holy prayers, beseeching you as a mother to be mindfull of them and of me as of your daughters, and know you that they and I will all the dayes of our life obserue and keepe

your

Digitized by Google

your holy precepts and aduertiſemẽts, beſides I deſire you should know that the Pope hath accorded to whatſoeuer I demaunded of him conformably to your intention and mine particularly in the matter you know; to wit that wee may not poſſeſſe any thing proper, I beſeech you my moſt dear mother to procure the Reuerend Father Generall that he often viſit vs, to comfort vs in God, whoſe grace be with your ſpirit. Amen.

Of the great deſire Sainte Clare *had to ſuffer martirdome for the loue of her Creatour.*

CHAP. XXVI.

THe Angelicall Doctour *S. Thomas* Who is held to be one of the greateſt and profoundeſt deuines that hath appeared in this world and a bright shining ſtarre in the Church of God is of opinion that there is not in our Chriſtian Religion any act more great more noble excellent and meritorious then the excellency of martirdome, in ſuch ſort as he exalteth the triumph of martyrs aboue the dignity of confeſſours and virgins, or aboue any other degree of merit; and truly not without iuſt ground, ſith *Ieſus Chriſt* hath firſt giuen his ſentence in fauour therof: ſaying ther is no Ioan. 15

greater testimonie of true affection and loue to a friend, than to expose his owne life for him: this is performed by the glorious martirs giuing proofe of their great zeale to God to the losse of their liues: which they expose like generous champions for the loue of their Creatour S. *Clare* vnderstanding that fiue Religious men of the Order S. *Francis* the yeare 1219. had receiued the palme of martirdome by Marmolin King of Marocho a great persecutour of Christians and that the Seraphicall Father had blessed the monastery of Alenquer (frō whence they were departed to goe vnto martirdome) with his benediction, be thou blessed the habitation of the most high which hast begot & brought forth to the king of heauen fiue beautifull flowers of the colour of the Rose and bloud, and of a sweet and most odoriferous sent; that is fiue true Freer Minors the first fruits of this Order; that for euer the Religious who dwell in thee obserue most exactly our Rule, she therfore being animated like a noble Elephant by the beholding of bloud shed for the loue of God, her heart was so feruently inflamed and set on fire, that she breathed nothing but martirdome and the effusion of her virginall bloud, desiring to become wholy like vnto her Spouse who was white by innocency and Ruddie in purple in his bloud; all her prayers and communions tended towards the obtaining of this feruerous desire of her soule, wherfore in imitation of the Religious before

Luc. Wadd. adannū. 1215. §. 36.

men-

mentioned desiring to shew vnto erring and ignorant soules the true way of saluation, not regarding her owne weaknes nor the frailty of her sex she resolued to passe the seas and to seeke out the king Marmolin, and for the execution of this her generous designe she presented supplication vpon supplication to the holy Father S. *Francis* beseeching him to giue her licence and permission: but the prudent and pitifull Father commaunded her to surcease and to suppresse the feruour of her interiour motions, perseuering in her conuent, declaring vnto her that her long life and presence was altogether needfull, sith she was ordained in the Pallace of the great king for guide and mistresse of his deare Espouses: & that in her monasterie she was to vndergoe, a long, teadious, and painfull martirdome: as since hath bene truly verified: sith for the space of two and fortie yeares with a Magnanimous and inuincible courage, she vnderwent pouerty, renunciation of her owne will, continuall fasting, discipline, and a life most austere, with continuall sicknes and corporall infirmity wherwith she macerated her flesh without all mercy or pity, contemning her aduersarie and all his temptations triumphing ouer him: crucifying the flesh with the concupiscences therof, by this meanes gaining a glorious victorie of martirdome. The Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* hauing receiued the impression of the sacred stigmates disclosed that singular fauour to his

eldeſt daughter in *Chriſt Ieſus* S. *Clare* ſhewing them vnto her and ſhe made him certaine plaiſters to mitigate his dolour: ſome of theſe plaiſters are yet reſerued in the ſayd Conuent of Religious Women in *aſſiſium* in great reuerence.

How Saint Francis *gaue his benediction to* Sainte Clare *before his death and his body was shewed vnto her after his deceaſe.*

CHAP. XXVII.

THe faithfull ſeruant of God *ſaint Francis* knowing that the time approched wherin he ſhould render vp his ſoule to his Creatour: being ſick in the Citty of *Aſſiſium* he deſired to be carryed to our Ladyes of Angells: that he might yeeld vp the ſpirit of life where he had receaued that of grace: and hauing obtained licence of the Bishop, and Gouernour of the City he cauſed him ſelfe to be carried being accompanied with great part of the City: and being come to the hoſpitall which is in the midde way betweene the City & *Portiuncula*, cauſing himſelfe in his bed to be layd downe on the ground and turning himſelfe

to

towards *Assisium* he besought God for the People and the Citie, and wept forseeing the great euills and warres which were to befall it and gaue his benediction saying: be thou O City blessed by the soueraine Lord God, because by thee many soules shall be saued, & many great seruants of God of both sexes shall dwell in thee, and by meanes of thee many shall passe to the king of glory, after his benediction prosecuting his way to our B. Lady of Angells, *Sainte Clare* his true disciple and deare daughter in *Iesus Christ* fearing not to see him before his death, sēt a Messenger vnto him how she was in the same extremity, and that she could not liue long yea perhaps she should goe the first, and that she felt inexplicable griefe to dy without his benediction, and without the comfort of his presence, he being her Maister and beloued Father, wherfore with bended knees she besought him by the sacred Passion of our B. Sauiour that he would not let her thus depart denoid of comfort, but graunt her this last and singular fauour as to visit her before he went to our Lady of Angells, the Seraphicall Father S. *Francis* felt himselfe moued with the bowells of fatherly compassion for that he could not satisfy her for the eminent perill wherein he was and for that the Phisitions knights and gentlemen who did tend him would not permit him: calling for penne inck and paper he sent her by a Religious man his benediction and then lifting vp

Digitized by Google

his eyes to heauen he sayd vnto him goe and comfort my beloued Sister *Clare* giuing her these good tidings that she shall see me before her death and it shall be soone, and all her Sisters likewise to their great consolation. This prophesie tooke effect: for after his death the Religious, Clergie, Priests, and multitude of people carried him with all piety, reuerence and deuotion to the Religious of *S. Damian* to the end they might see and behold this holy body imbellished and adorned with the sacred woundes of our Redeemer, and that they might giue him the last imbracement.

It is not to be expressed what content S. *Clare* and her Religious Sisters receiued beholding the body of their holy guide and director: adorned with the fine diamants and pretious pearles of his sacred Woundes, wherfore *S. Clare* brake forth into these wordes: O God most admirable in the person of our holy Father *S. Francis*, sith thou hast honored him to beare the markes of thy sacred passion, the badges of thy crosse, the Woundes and scarres wherby thou hast redeemed the world and gained a most glorious and triumphant victory. O my daughters how happy are our eyes which doe merit to behold the sacred stigmats which God with his owne handes hath impressed in the handes of our beloued Father: O thrise happy are our lipps wherwith wee are permitted to kisse the woundes of his handes: and Feet, and that of his side florishing like a

fresh

fresh vermillion Rose O sacred wounds first indured by the sonne of God for our sinnes, and now renewed in our Seraphicall Father for our sakes S. *Clare* with her Religious haning honoured and kissed the fiue vermillion Roses of his woundes, watered and bathed his body with their teares: she laboured (but in vaine) to haue taken out one of the Nailes forth of the wound of his hand to haue conserued it for a pretious Relicque wherfore she contented her selfe to dipp a cloth into the woundes of the Father which is to this day kept with great deuotion in the Conuent of S. *Clare* in *Assisium*: she measured the height of his body and caused him to be drawne in liuely colours, which picture she placed in the Oratorie of her Religious the body was restored to the people who were much wearyed with their long stay he was carried to S. *Georges* and buried in a new tombe where he remained foure whole yeares vnder sure custodie vntill a Church was built to his honour, at the despence of Pope *Gregorie* the ninth, he himselfe laying the first stone in the presence of a multitude of people, if you desire now to know the posture of this B. body, it is in a Caue or Chapell vnder the ground, standing vpright on his feet without any stay, his face turned towards the east, his eyes lifted vp to heauen looking very attentiuely as he was accustomed in his life time, his handes ioyned one within the other within the sleeues of his

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1218. §. 19.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1230. §. 4.

hab

habit resting on his breast: in all parts his body is as entire & free from corruptiō as at the first day of his death: nothing being lacking vnto him but speech and motion: his woundes and the bloud of them are exceeding fresh in this posture and manner Pope *Nicolas* the fifth with six other persons did find him the yeare 1449 which was 223. yeares after his death, he yeelded so sweet and fragrant a smell that scarsely could they support it for it was so admirably penetrating that it raysed their spirits into extasie.

Of the spirituall doctrine wherwith Sainte Clare *nourished her daughters.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

THis vigilant Abbesse *Clare* Was not ignorant how the care of soules is great perillous, and dangerous, in such sort as the most virtuous and most sufficient finde themselues oppressed therwith often sighing and groaning vnder the burden of their office, as accountable to God for the soules of their subiects, according to that saying of the Apostles: Obey your guides and be you subiect to them for they watch ouer your soules as those that must render an account for you before the

ad Heb. 13.

face

face of our Lord: an Angell guardian hath but one soule in his custodie, and yet he hath often enough to doe, but a superiour hath as many soules as he hath subiects. For which cause this prudent prelate *Clare* did often seeke to haue freed her selfe from the chardge, but obedience and charity forced her to bow vnder the yoake of superiours she shined in the middest of her daughters like a most refulgent sunne by the light of her holy doctrine and the splendour of her good workes: coupling together doing and teaching; her toung, and her handes, her words, and her works. The daughters did behold themselues as in a glasse in the life of their mother labouring to doe as she did, and in imitation of her they indeuored to aduance in the loue of their heauenly spouse, darting in secret toward heauen most sweet and amorous affections sufficiently declaring that they delighted in nothing but heauenly things after which they incessantly breathed by the power full attraction of their Superiours incitements he that would haue seene an Abridgment and model of perfection might haue looked on the Conuent of S. *Damian*, where the loue of God and obedience to Superiours did rule, all the Religious being Angells, and amiddest the hell of this world was to be found a Celestiall paradice. She taught them to cleer their soules of all rumors of the world that they might the more freely attaine to the high secrets of God: and not to adheare with disordinate affection

Chron. p.1.l.3. c.7. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1215. §. 38.

totheir kindred but to forgett the house of their Father to be gratefull in the eyes of *Jhesu*; she admonished them to surmount and contemne the necessities of their bodyes, and to gett a habit of repressing the deceipts and appetites of the flesh by the bridle of reason: she allso instructed them that the subtill enemy armed with malice continually addresseth his hidden snares to surprise pure soules, and that he tempteth the pious in an other sort then worldlings; finally she would have the howers of the day well deuided, part to be employed in prayer and the other part in corporal labour being an Enemy to disordered tedious and too long deuotions, as being the feruours of self-loue and feigned holines. After the Canonicall howers she ordained that her Sisters should be employed in handy-labours the more to incite them againe to prayer, and by these occupations were inkindled in their breastes fyrie dartes of diuine loue, she had such a winneing and allureing conuersation that she rauished the hearts of her Sisters, none euer heard her speake but it mollifyed their hearts, others dissolued into teares before her like snow by the powerfull beating of the sun beames: neuer was ther seene a stricter silence then there, nor a more Angelicall manner of life, there was not in this holy house to be seene one sole act of vanitie neither in word, nor signe; nor any lightnes of Idle discourses, so mortifyed they were. *S. Clare* had not onely a care of the soules

of

of her daughters but alſo of their weake and tender bodyes prouiding for their neceſſities with great zeale and charity, for she went oftē in the night when it was cold to viſit and couer them when they ſlept, and if she found any benummed with cold or otherwiſe in ill diſpoſition through the ſtrict obſeruance of the cōmon rigour she commaunded them to take ſome recreation till ſuch time as they had ſatisfyed their neceſſity: when this meeke Doue ſaw any of her Religious aſſaulted with tēptatiō or with melancholie she called her aſide and louingly comforted her: and often times caſt her ſelfe proſtrate at the feet of thoſe that were afflicted with ſadnes or ſickness to mitigate the force of their greefe by her motherly cheriſhings: for which they prooued not vngratfull, but ſurrendered themſelues deuoutly into the handes of their holy mother, they reuerenced the Office of Prelacie in their Miſtreſſe and followed the paths of ſo diligent a guide, ſquaring their actions by this Eſpouſe of *Ieſus Chriſt*, admiring the excellency of her ſanctity and charitie.

Of the great desire she had to heare the word of God.

CHAP. XXIX.

THis Glorious sainte tooke singular content in hearing the word of God, knowing very well that vnder the rind therof is hid the sweetnes of spirit, she knew very well that sermons did greatly profit soules denouncing the B. way to eternity to the hearers. and as a good appetite and to rellish meate is a signe of good health, and giueth sufficient testimonie of the good disposition of the body: euen so he that delighteth to hear the word of God in sermons or spirituall discourses, hath an assured signe of good disposition and health of soule, the nutriment of the spirit is the word of God: if it be neglected or reiected the soule is not able to liue being depriued of her Food. Wherfore this wise and diligent mother prouided by the meanes of deuout preachers nutriment for the soules of her Religious, she felt an vnspeakable comfort in her heart in hearing the word of God, and alwayes noted and drew out some point from the sermon for her owne aduancement in perfectiō, reioycing deuoutly in the memorie of her heauenly spouse *Christ Iesus*. Once on a time hearing brother *Philipp*

Chron. p 1. l. 8. c. 17 Luc. Wadd. ad annū 1251. §. 27.

of

of *Adrian* a famous preacher, there was seene ſtanding before her a beautifull young child who remained with her all the time of the exhortation comforting and cherishing her with great delight Siſter *Agnes* of *Aſſiſium* enioying the ſight of this viſion receaued in it ſo great ſweetnes of ſpirit that she was not able to expreſſe it by words, and albeit she had neuer ſtudied yet did she much delight to heare a learned man preach drawing from it the marrow and ſubſtance, which she ſubtilly obtained and taſted with much more guſt: she accuſtomed to ſay that the ſermon of whoſoeuer preaching the word of God, was exceeding profitable to ſoules, conſidering that it is no leſſe prudence to know how ſome times to gather beautifull and ſweet flowers from amongſt groſſe and sharp thornes, then to eat the wholeſome fruit of a good plant. Pope *Gregorie* the ninth prohibited once at the inſtancie of certaines Prelates that no Religious mā should goe preach at the monaſterie of the poore Ladyes without his owne expreſſe licence, wherat the pitifull mother much lamenting, becauſe that from thēce forward her daughters would ſeldome be refectionated with ſpirituall and holy doctrine, wherfore weeping she ſayd let them take from vs the Religious men who labour to get vs our temporall maintenāce ſince they depriue vs of thoſe who giue vs the ſuſtenance of our ſpirituall life: and indeed she ſent to the Prouinciall Miniſter the Brothers

that were deputed to serue and begg for the Monasterie: refusing to haue Religious to seeke them bread, since they depriued them of those that gaue them bread for the nourishment of their soules, wherof his holines being aduertised he presently reuoked his former prohibition, referring all to the disposition of the Generall of the Freers Minors.

Of the feruour of Sainte Clare *in her prayer.*

CHAP, XXX.

THe principall prayer which God requireth of vs consisteth in deuotion, for he is not delighted in the multiplicity of words but in the feruour of the spirit, the prayer of the heart is more pleasing vnto him then that of the mouth the eye on the booke but the heart with God: this saying is conformable to that of our Redeemer: when you pray doe not speake much as the heathens doe: for they thinke to be heard for the multiplicitie of their words, but enter into your chamber in secret: to giue vs to vnderstand that our prayers are not heard for the multiplying of words, but the attention and the interiour affection, according to this vsuall saying, not the

voyce

voyce but the vvee not the harmonie of the muſicke but the heart not the clamour but the loue doth ſound in the eares of God: I had rather ſayth the Doctour of the Gentiles ſpeake fiue words with my ſpirit then ten thouſand with my toung, our Sauiour perſeuered a whole houer in prayer in the garden vſing but few words in like ſort the theefe made his petitiõ on the croſſe. Dauid with one *Peccaui* the Publican with few words. Our Seraphicall Father perſeuered a whole night with this ſentence, Who art thou my God, and who am I; often repeating it with great effuſion of teares, and was in ſuch ſort abſorbed in the conſideration of the diuine greatnes, and his owne litlenes, that Brother Leo his Confeſſour ſaw him often times eleuated farre from the ground, S. *Clare* his moſt humble daughter was ſo tranſported in her prayer and abſorbed in the depth of the loue of her Creatour that she forgot her ſelfe and her corporall neceſſities whervnto she was ſubiect: the beginning of the night she repoſed a litle, but preſenly arifing she paſſed the reſidue of the time in a profound ſilence, of mentall prayer and holy contemplation and the ſweet embracements of her Spouſe her conuerſation in ſpirit being continually aloft with the B. Citizens of heauen: prayer was the continuall refreshment of her labours, and aſſured bulwarke againſt temptations, and a ſouueraine remedie in all her neceſſities: she had full confidence to obtaine

all

all things of the diuine goodnes by the meanes of prayer: and was accuſtomed to ſay; that euery Chriſtian ought to begg of God in this life the gift of prayer, ſith without it wee can neither aduance nor perſiſt in ſpirituall life and to giue example to her Religious, she made to appeare in all her actions that her ſpirit was allwayes elevated in God by prayer, the abundance of her teares and the frequent ſighes which proceeded from her heart, the ſerenity of her countenance & her eyes fixed on heaue, did giue aſſured teſtimonie of her intenſe feruour and inflamed deuotion in prayer, to behold her was ſufficient to excite others to deuotion, her countenance was ſo ſweet and attractiue, and by many externall ſignes did manifeſtly appeare what a chãge and mutation was wrought in her by the feruour of her prayer: One day the flame of diuine loue hidden in her ſoule did exteriourly appeare: for one of her firſt diſciples by name Siſter *Benauenta* of *Perugia* did ſee her enuironed with a great light darting forth ſuch beames of glory as if she had bene inueſted with heauenly beatitude an other time as on a ſunday they ſung the Antiphone *Vidi aquam egredientem*, being wholy inflamed in the contemplation of ſo great a miſterie giuing of holy water to her Religious she cryed out, O daughters call to mind the moſt ſacred water flowing from the ſide of our Redeemer the day of his moſt dolorous paſſion, when *S. Clare* came from prayer her face

Was

was shining dazeling the eyes of the beholders, and by her words it was easily perceaued that she came from prayer, discoursing with such feruour of spirit inflaming the hearts of the Religious that heard her, procuring heerby an infatiable thirst after celestiall comforts; in this manner she ordinarily liued replenished with the knowledge of high secrets, passing ouer this deceipfull world in company of her heauenly spouse *Christ Iesus*, and standing on this turning wheele she was sustained with firme constancie perseuering in this eleuation of soule to the height of heauen, participating of the diuine secrets which she disclosed to none if it were not very needful; for she knew very well that often times an inestimable treasure is lost for a base price of vaine glory: offending the giuer, and falling into hazard neuer to enioy more. For the true touch-stone and solid signe of an humble soule is not to vaunt of illuminations or to boast that our Lord hath reuealed this or that vnto them; visions though neuer so true are often dangerous; but especially to women who are addicted to vanity: sometimes it happeneth that in the beginning they haue true and great fauours, but cursed Satan doth often transforme himselfe into the shape of an Angell of light according to the saying of the Apostle, and when he perceaueth that wee make account of visions he causeth false to slide in with the true, and if not bad at least indiscreet which doo corrupt the person 2.Cor.11

and getting footing in the spirits of the too credulous causeth great disorders: the true signe and token of heauenly fauours, and the cheefe secret of a spirituall soule, is sanctity of life in those who receaue such heauenly graces, with a profound humility proportionable to the sublimitie wherevnto our Lord doth raise them neuer abandoning the center of their owne nothing, and also Obedience and totall resignation to the will of their Superiour and director, holding his voice for the voyce of God, and his aduise for the touch-stone to discouer the verity of apparitions it is the best vision of all to obay God by the mouth of our guide and director which doth neuer deceaue any, whereas the other are dangerous, these are the true Oracles and secure lights whereby wee may order our liues, S. *Clare* did neuer relate any vision or apparition but concealed all in the sacred closset of her heart, and the more God fauored her with his holy visitations, the more she became humble and full of confusion not reputeing her selfe more virtuous then others. This sainte was accustomed to call vp the yong Religious a little before mattins, and to awake them with the ordinary signe, to excite them very often to prayse their Creatour. She lighted the lamp and rung to mattins so that negligence found no entrance into her monastery nor sloath had there any place: she also by the sting of sharp reprehension and of her liuely and effectuall examples expelled tepidity, and

irksom-

irkesomnes in prayer and the seruice of God.

How great account Pope Gregorie the ninth made of the prayers of S. Clare, and of a letter to this effect.

CHAP. XXXI.

POpe Gregorie the ninth who before his promotion to this supreame dignitie was called Cardinall Vgolin Bishop of Ostie protectour of the order of S. *Francis* and S. *Clare*, (he dyed with the reputation of a great saint God sealing his life with many miracles,) had a singuler confidence in the prayers of this seruant of God hauing experienced their great vertue and efficacy: and often times when he was in any difficulty both whiles he was Cardinall and Bishop of Hostia and afterwardes when he was Pope he would by letters recommend him selfe to this holy Virgin demanding of her help & ayd knowing assuredly of what importance her assistance was: this being in him not onely a great humility but also worthy to be diligently imitated to see the Vicar of *Iesus Christ* vpon earth to begg help of a seruant of God; this great Pastour knew very

well what diuine loue could doe, and how freely pure virgins doe find the port of the consistorie of the diuine maiesty open. There is extant a very deuout letter written to *S. Clare* by this Pope while he was Cardinall which is heer inserted to make it appeer how the spirit of God made his residence in this Prelate and what deuotion he carryed to the sanctity of the glorious virgin S. *Clare*.

To his most deer sister in *Iesus Christ* and mother of his saluation Sister Clare, Vgoline a miserable sinner Bishop of Hostia, recommendeth him selfe whatsoeuer he is and whatsoeuer he may be, wellbeloued Sister in *Christ Iesus*; since the necessity of my returne hath separated me from your holy speeches, and depriued me of that pleasure to conferre with you of celestiall treasures, I haue had much sorrow of heart, abundance of teares in my eyes, and haue felt an exceeding greefe: and that in such sort that if I had not found at the feet of our Lord *Iesus Christ* the consolation of his ordinarie piety, I feare I had fallen into such anguishes as my spirit would haue forsaken me and my soule vtterly melted away, and not without reason, because, that ioye fayled me with which I discourssed with your good company of the sacred bodye of our sweet Redeemer *Christ Iesus* and of his presence vpon earth, celebrateing the feast of Easter with you and the other seruants of our Lord. And as our B. Sauiour whiles by his dolorous pas-

sion

sion and death he was absent frō the presence of his disciples they were possessed with an extreme grief and affliction so doth your absence procure my desolation. And though I acknowledge my selfe a great sinner considering the prerogatiue of your merits and the rigour of your most holy Religion, yet without doubt the multitude of my sinnes is such and so greeuously haue I offēded God the vniuersall Lord that I am not worthy to be vnited to the glory of the elect; nor to be sequestred from worldly occupations if your teares and prayers doe not obtaine me pardon of my sinnes: and therfore to you I commit my soule, to you I commend my spirit, as *Iesus Christ* vpon the crosse recommended his spirit to his heauenly Father, to the end that in the terrible day of the vniuersall iudgment, you giue an account for me if you be not diligent and carefull of my saluation for I confidently beleeue that you may obtaine of the souueraigne iudge whatsoeuer by your deuotion and teares you shall at any time aske or demand of him The Pope speaketh not of comming to *Assisium* as I desire but I purpose to come visit you and your Sisters at my first commodity recommend me I pray you to *Agnes* your Sister and mine, and to all your other Sisters in *Christ Iesus*.

How Sainte Clare tormented the diuells by prayer.

CHAP. XXXII.

PRayer offred vnto God with humility submission and knowledge of ones selfe, tormenteth and surmounteth the diuells; for he hauing beene cast into the infernall depthes by his pride is not able to support the humility of him who singeth the prayses of God and resigneth himselfe to his will, reputing himselfe a sinner and defectiue. But often hath beene forced to confesse himselfe surmounted tyed and burned by their prayers. This noble Damsell *Clare* vsed prayer as a shield wherwith she surmounted the diuell and triumphed ouer his temptations, beating backe the darts of the enemie, and burned them exceedingly, a very deuout woman of the Bishoppricke of *Pisa* came one day to the monasterie of S. *Damian* to thanke God and his seruant S. *Clare* for hauing bene by her merits deliuered of fiue diuells that possessed her which going out of her body confessed that the prayers of S. *Clare* did exceedingly burne them. Wherat *S. Clare* humbly cast her selfe prostrate in prayer reputing her selfe vnworthy of the familiarity with so great a maiesty, conforming her selfe to her

Chron. p. 1. l. 8. c. 15. Luc. Wad. ad annum, 1251. parag. 17

Re-

Digitized by Google

Redeemer who the night of his passion praying in the garden was not content to bend his knees but cast himselfe on the ground, as she lay with her face on the ground bathed in teares and sweetly kissing it with such content as if she had held in her armes her spouse *Christ Iesus* at whose sacred feet her teares did streame, and her kisses were impressed in the dead of the night the Prince of darknes swelling with rage and furie to behold so great humility sent one of his most accursed & wickedest spirits to persecute her. He appeared vnto her in the shape of a black a moore, and bid her cease weeping least she did loose her sight, & that she might doe more seruice vnto God in gouerning well her monasterie, thē in weeping so forlornly: the S. perceauing this instigation of Satan, answered him, if I become blind and be not able to gouerne the Conuent there will be enow found to doe it who will doe it better then I: thou and thy adherents are truly blind because you can neuer see the incōprehensible light: wherat the diuel fled away confounded. This same night this humble virgin being in prayer after mattins, powring forth riuers of teares in her deuotions, behold the temptour approched appearing in hideous shape like a black boy and sayd vnto her weepe not so much vnlesse thou wilt haue thy braines to dissolue and liquify and purge it at thy eyes and nostrils and become deformed: the inuincible virgin answered him with great fervour spit-

ting

ting in the face of this Infernall monster: he who seruesth Iesus Christ cā haue no deformity; these wordes made the furious dragon to burst who presently disappeared and was swallowed in to hel. Being one day after None retired and her minde fixed on God in prayer and her thoughts ingulfed in the Ocean of the diuine goodnes, the cursed diuel came vnto her and beating her very outragiously so farre as to wound her on the face wherby one of her eyes remained all bloody and a scarre vpon her cheeke crying and howling out in this manner accursed thou doest burne vs by thy prayers, but notwithstanding all these reproches she dedesisted not from prayer.

Of the great deuotion of saint Francis *&* sainte Clare *to the Natiuitie of our Redeemer and of two notable miracles.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

THE B. seruant of God *Francis* and his virtuous daughter *Clare* did beare singular deuotiō to the natiuity of our Redeemer *Christ Iesus*, wherby so high a maiesty had annihilated him selfe assumeing our litlenes and humane nature, bereauing himselfe of

his

his diuine greatnes. This zelatour of the diuine honour resideing neer to the Citty of Crecio, resolued to celebrate the festiuity after a new manner to excite and awake the deuotion of the faithfull hauing for this effect obtained licence of the Pope to auoyd scandall, he made to be adorned a great stable with an open Porch where he caused hay to be layed and a crib: thē he caused an Ox and an Asse to be brought & assembled together so many Religious mē that they were in number more thē the inhabitants of the place. But for that he had published this solemnity all the neighbouring people flocked thither, bringing trumpetts cornets and all kind of musicall instruments, in such sort as the montaignes adiacent resounded with harmonie; they ceased not all the night to sing and make Iubilie in that stable, were S. *Francis* and a great number of his Religious prayed before three Images of wood representing the child *Iesus*, the glorious virgin Mary and B. S. *Ioseph*, and ther were lighted great store of wax tapers which were decently and artificially placed. The Patriarcke of the poore sung the ghospell at the midnight masse, and then preached to the people with such tendernes and deuotion that being to pronounce *Iesus*, he was not able but called him the little child of *Bethlem*. This feast did not passe without fruit for a gentleman of a singular note and virtue called *Iohn de Grecio* a familiar frind of the saint & imitatour of his virtues, often auouched that

he had seene that night a beautifull child reposing in the Cribb or manger whom S. *Francis* taking and holding in his Armes sweetly hugged and embraced, the hay being taken away cured many personnes and beastes of their infirmities, wherby wee may gather that God did in a singular manner secõd the deuotion of this his seruant. After the death of the Seraphicall Father in the place of this stable was built a magnificent Chappell and in the place of the manger an Altar was erected to the honour of God our Creatour. His beloued daughter *Clare* receaued the same grace and fauour, for one Christmasse night when both men and Angels solemnised the festiuitie of the Natiuitie of our Redeemer all the Religious woemen went to the quier to mattins leauing their holy mother accompanyed only with her greeuous infirmity, wherfore hauing begunne to meditate vpon the great misterie of that night; and lamenting exceedingly that she could not assist at the diuine seruice she sighing sayd. O my God thou seest how I remaine heere alone, and ending this she beganne to heare the mattins that were sung in the Church of S. *Francis* in *Assisium*, very distinctly vnderstanding the voyce of the Religious, and the very sound of the Organs, yet was she not so neer the sayd Church as she might humainly heare what was sung there but it must necessarily be concluded that this was miraculously done in one of these two sorts, either that the singing of

of

the ſayd Religious was by the will of God caryed to S. *Clare* or her hearing was extended by eſpeciall grace of God euen to the monaſterie of the ſayd Religious, this ſainte was moreouer fauored with a heauenly viſion which did exceedingly comfort and reioyce her: for she was by allmighty God eſteemed worthy to ſee in ſpirit his holy Cribb. The morning following the Religious comming to viſit her she ſayd vnto them, deare Siſters bleſſed for euer be our Lord *Ieſus Chriſt* that it hath pleaſed him not to leaue me alone as you haue done, but know that by the grace of his diuine Maieſty I haue heard all the ſeruice that this night hath bene performed in the Church of our holy Father *Saint Francis*: recounting vnto them in Order all which had paſſed and as they admired the Sainte did aſſure them how the litle child *Ieſus* appeared vnto her at the very hower of his birth: thus she being abſent merited to ſee what her daughters could not being preſent.

The deuotion of Sainte Clare *to the holy Sacrament.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

Clare the true Espouse of *Christ Iesus* exhorted her Religious to beare all honour reuerence and respect to the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, and often to refectionate their soules with this diuine repast and to giue them a paterne and example she receaued her God with so great feruour and deuotion that she rauished the hearts of her daughters: beforeshe presented her self thervnto a riuer of teares flowed from her eyes S[illegible] aproched thervnto with great feare and humility reuerencing and adoring her Lord & Creatour hidden vnder these Sacramentall formes, after the reception she was so absorbed in the consideration of so great a charity in the sonne of God that she remained a long time in extasie without motion: she often sayd to her Religious: O wonderfull depth of the diuine Abisse, O most profound humility of the sonne of God the maister and Lord of the vniuersall world to humble himselfe so low as to giue himselfe vnto vs vnder the forme of

bread

bread, let vs duely ponder my deare Sisters this vnspeakable humility, and purify your hearts before the sacred cõmunion: be pure and cleane from sinne to the end he may receaue you as he giueth himselfe vnto you. S. *Clare* tooke great comfort to see Churches and Altars well adorned and neatly kept and the ornaments therof decent and that the seruice of God should be performed with deuotion and punctuality, and that nothing requisit should be wanting and though she was very sickly neuertheles she caused her selfe to be set vp in her bedd and stayed her selfe against something in such sort as she might conueniently spinne an exercise which she exceedingly affected and imployed her selfe therin most willingly doing it very delicatly and with the thred of her labour she caused pure fine cloth to be made which she made into Corporalls for the vse of the challice, she once made fiftie cupple of Corporalls and folding them in silke sent them to seuerall Churches in the Valley of *Spoletum*.

How the Mores were driuen from the monasterie and the City of Assisium by the virtue of the holy Sacrament of the Altar, and by the prayer of S. Clare.

CHAP. XXXV.

PRayer is a generall instrumẽt wherby wee vndertake and operate all things, and as in the affaires of this world monney hath bene inuented for the facility of commerce, a meanes so fitt and proper that whosoeuer hath riches may truly vaunt that he hath all things: euen so prayer is like a spirituall Coine wherby wee obtaine all things, for she is so powerfull that she can doe all, and swayeth all: she openeth prisons and setteth Captiues at liberty, she shutteth vp the gates of Hell; and openeth the gates of heauen, she penetrateth the cloudes and reacheth to God himselfe, she surmounteth all enemies visible and inuisible, in such sort as the iust man hath more power in praying, then a great Armie in fighting: which may be prooued by sacred and profane Historie: but two of *Sainte Clare* shall suffice vs. The Emperour Frederick the second an

Enemy

Enemy to the Church who hath done so great mischeeues to Catholickes, Wasting destroying killing and massacring without mercy all he encountred particularly in the valley of *Spoletum* because it was subiect to the Bishop of *Rome*; drunk of the vessel of wrath, his Captaines and souldiers being scattered ouer the feildes as grasse-hoppers with sword to murther people, & with fier to burne their houses, the earth was bathed with bloud and furie. The impyetie of this Emperour did so augment that he had assembled all the Mores that dwelt vpon the mountaignes and amidst the desarts to make him selfe the more fearefull to his vassalls; and after he had by large promises gained these mores and disposed of them in diuers places, he gaue them at length for retire a very ancient but ruinated City which to this present day is called. *Nouua des Moros* which they fortifyed and then retired thither about twenty thousand fighting men who did much mischiefe ouer all *Apulia* and in many other Christian places; One day these merciles bloudsuckers thirsting after the bloud of Christians came vnexpectedly to the City of *Assisium*, cruelly massacring all they mett, in fine they went about to blow vp the gates of the monasterie of S. *Damian* and to scale the walls wherat the Religious were so surprised with feare and terrour hearing these inraged doggs to howle and barke so neer them not knowing where to seeke for help nor from

whom

whom to hope for deliuery from so eminent perrill but onely by the merrits of their holy mother whome with infinit teares and sighes they aduertised of what they heard and saw. This holy Virgin though very sicke encouraged her Religious and made her selfe to be carryed with incredible constancie to the gate of the monastery at the entry wherof in the vewe of all her aduersaries she caused to be placed very reuerendly the holy sacrament of the Eucharist in the Pix: before the which falling prostrate on the ground, she sent forth from her heart these sweet lamentations, replenished with confidence in her beloued spouse *Christ Iesus*; is it possible my God thy will should be that these thy seruants who can not vse material weapons to defend them selues & whome I haue heer brought vp and noursed in thy holy loue, should now be deliuered in to the power of the infidell Mores, O my God preserue them if thou please and me likewise, for allbeit thy diuine maiesty hath committed them to my gouuernement; it is not in my power to defend them from so great a perrill sith this protectiō can not be but by a worke of thine omnipotencie, therfore doe I recommēd it to thy diuine maiesty, with all the affection that I am able. So soone as this holy virgin had sent this prayer vnto heauen, she heard a voice so small and delicate as if it had bin of a sucking child that sayd I will protect you for euer. The holy mother did not yet giue ouer

to pro-

to prosecute her prayer in this sort, my God I humbly beseech thee if so it be thy holy will to preserue and defend this thy Citie of *Assisium* which doth nourrish vs for the loue it beareth to thy diuine maiesty; wherto God answered, this City shall suffer much, but I will by my fauour defend it *S. Clare* haueing heard so gratious newes lifted vp her face bathed with teares, and comforted her beloued daughters saying, deer Sisters I assure you that no euill shall befall you only be carefull to haue a firme faith and confidence in *Iesus Christ*: the diuine assistance made no delay, for the presumption and rage of the Mores was incōtinently cooled so that a sudden vnknowne terrour hauing surprised them they speedely retired ouer the walls falling one vpon another many of them being hurt and maymed they were forced to abandon the prey which they had gotten in to their clawes flying rather the virtue of the saint then the sword of the enemie. They being put to flight by the virtue of the holy sacrament and the prayers of S. *Clare*, she commaunded her Religious not to disclose the fauour of this heauenly voice dureing her life to auoyd the tickling of vaine glory: from this heroicall act is brought in the custome to draw *S. Clare* with the Pix of the holy sacrament, to shew to posterity how in virtue of the power of God hidden vnder the sacramentall formes she deliuered her monastery and the City of *Assisiū* frō the cruelty & inhumanity of the *Barbariās*.

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1255. §. 7.

How the City of Assisium was an other time deliuered by the prayers of sainte Clare.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Chron. p.1.l.8. c.14. Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1251. §. 16.

VPon an other time one of the principall Captaines of the Emperour *Fredericke* called *Vitalus Auersa* a man ambitious & coueteing glory: very courageous and a valiant Souldier, he conducted his troupes to besiedge *Assisium*, and hauing inuironed it he proposed to waste and spoile the Country ther about makeing a totall ruine to the very trees that were hewed downe and then laying his siedge he vttered menaceing and vaunting oathes that he would not stirre thence till he had giuen the City a victorious assault, and this siedge continued so long that the beseidged beganne to loose courradge wanting many things extremly needfull vnto them: *sainte Clare* hauing heard the rumour of this cursed intention shott a dart of loueing affection vnto heauen powring forth a riuer of teares which she interrupted with many sighes and assembling her Religious she discourssed in this sort with them, my deer Sisters you know our necessities

haue

haue euer bin ſupplyed by the Charity of this City, ſo that wee ſhould be very vngratfull if wee ſhould not according to our ability aſſiſt them in this extreame neceſſity: then ſhe commaunded aſhes to be brought her, and all her Religious to diſcoiſe their heades and to giue them example ſhe beganne to couer her bare head with aſhes; where in all the Religious following her ſhe ſayd: goe yee to our Lord *Ieſus Chriſt* your ſpouſe and with the the greateſt humility and feruent prayers you cã poſſible demaũd of him the deliuery of the towne: it can not be expreſſed with what feruour and teares theſe deuout virgins inceſſantly offred their prayers vnto God the ſpace of one intire day and night demaunding mercy in the behalf of the ſayd City beſieged by their ennemies, theſe prayers and teares were of ſuch force and virtue that God ſent them the day following powerfull ſuccour in ſuch ſort that the enemies Camp was defeated, his troupes put to flight and the Captaine conſtrayned ſhamefully and in deſpight of his forces without ſound of trumpett to raiſe his ſiege: and was ſhortly after ſlaine.

Digitized by Google

Of the feruent loue of S. Clare *to the passion of* Iesus Christ.

CHAP, XXXVII.

OVr holy Father S. *Francis* being once demaunded by a Superiour of his Order why he did not cause some spirituall lecture to be read vnto him wherby his spirit might be recreated in his infirmity, he answered him with great feruour, my Brother I doe alwayes find so great consolation and loue in the memory of the life death and passion of our Sauiour *Christ* Iesus that if I should liue to the worlds end I should need no other lecture. He exhorted his Religious often to turne ouer this sacred Booke and in comparison of it to make little reckoning of others: it was also the Manuell of his daughter S. *Clare*, for whosoeuer would haue found her might haue sought her in the woundes of *Christ* Iesus there she spēt her time busieing her selfe with great content, she had in such sort ingrauen within the bowells of her hart the sacred Passion of our Redeemer that as often as she called it to memory a torrent of teares streamed frō her eyes she sucked from the sacred woundes of our Sauiour some times resentments of sorrow: other times of ioye and consolation with singuler sweetnes;

and

and the crosse of *Christ Iesus* which with her deerest spouse she carryed in her soule the waight wherof gaue her so much the more tast of contentment as she felt more griefe. The great abundance of teares which she shead kept her some times out of her selfe, and the internall loue which she had imprinted in her heart, in a manner continually represented vnto her *Christ Iesus* crucifyed. She ordinarily gaue example by Workes of what she taught her Religious by Wordes for often times admonishing and instructing any of them in priuate touching any point of the passion before her discourse was ended a shower of teares distilled from her eyes. Among the howers of the diuine office which are sung in the church she assisted with greater deuotion at the sixt and ninth hower, because at the sixt which is at the twelfth hower of the day *Iesus Christ* was nayled to the crosse and at none which is three howers after he yeelded vp his ghost hauing suffred for vs the space of three howers the torments of the crosse therfore the sorrowfull virgin was at those howers crucifyed with her Redeemer. She frequently meditated vpon the misterie of the fiue Woundes haueing learned by heart the office of the holy crosse as our holy Father S. *Francis* composed it and taught it vnto her. She was accustomed to weare next her naked skinne a cord with thirteene knotts a secret remambrance of the woundes and dolours of our Sauiour. Vpon holy thurs-

day in lent, at the hower of the agonie of our Redeemer when he ſweat water and bloud in the garden this virgin withdrew her ſelfe in to her Oratory full of greife, and ſett her ſelfe to accompany the ſonne of God in his prayer as if she had corporally beheld him and ſuffred his impriſonment, his deriſions, iniuries, reproches, bufferts and ſtripes, his condemnation, croſſe, and ignominious death, exciteing in her ſelfe the like griefe: wherfore wounded with compaſſion she sat downe vpon a ſtraw bedd, and all that night and the day following she remained thus abſorbed in God and ingulfed in a profound contemplatiõ her eyes being opẽ without motion she ſeemed to hold them fixed in one place and remained ſo inſenſible being conioyntly Crucifyed with *Ieſus Chriſt*, that a Religious familiar vnto her coming often to ſee if she wanted any thing she found her allwayes in one manner but vpon the night of holy ſaturday this deuout Religious came to her deer mother with a candle, and partly by ſignes, partly by wordes makeing her the beſt she could to underſtand the commaundement that the holy Father *ſaint Francis* gaue her that she should not lett paſſe one day without takeing & eating ſome thing: S. *Clare* as comeing from an other world ſayd vnto her, what need haue you to light a candle is it not day? wherto the religious anſwered; mother the night of holy thurſday is paſt as alſo good Fryday and wee are now in the night

of

of Easter eue, the sainte replyed, my daughter blessed be this sleep which Almighty God at length after my long desire hath granted me, but I admonish and commaund you not to speake heerof to any creature liueing whiles I shall liue in this world. It was to conceale and inwrapp in the sacred silence of a profound humility this great and heauenly fauour to burie vnder the ashes the sweet and pleasant poyson of vaine glory.

How sainte Clare *by the signe of the crosse wrought many miracles.*

CHAP. XXXVIII.

OVr soueraine Redeemer *Christ Iesus* recompenced well the holy desires and good workes of his beloued Espouse *Clare* for as she was inflamed with an infinit loue of the misterie of the holy crosse, so by the virtue and power of the same crosse our Lord did innoble and honour her with many miracles, often times making the signe of the holy crosse vpon the sicke they were instantly cured, which power was indifferently extended to all sortes of diseases a child of three yeares of the City of *Spoletum* called Mathew had by mishap thrust a little stone vp his nose, from

Whence

whence it could not be gotten out so that the child grew in great perrill of his life, he was brought to S: *Clare* who makeing the signe of the crosse vpon him immediatly the stone fell out and he was perfectly well. One of her owne Religious called *Benauenta* haueing had for the space of twelue yeares an impostume vnder her Arme which did purge by fiue seuerall issues, she made vpon it the wholsome signe of the crosse then takeing of the playster all her old soares were intirely cured. An other Religious woeman called *Aymee* being for more then a yeare space afflicted with the dropsie together with an extreme paine in her sides and burning feuer, S. *Clare* mooued with compassion had recourse to her noble and infallible remeady making vpon her body the holy signe of the crosse in the name of her beloued spouse *Christ Iesus*, and the Religious was perfectly cured. A Religious man called *Stephen* hauing a hot feuer that exceedingly vexed him the holy Father S. *Frances* sent him to S. *Clare* to make the signe of the crosse vpon him as one who wel knew her virtue and perfection which he exceedingly honoured, *saint Clare* as a daughter of obedience presently made vpon him the signe of the holy crosse then left him a little to sleep in the Church in the place where she was accustomed to pray, and he haueing a little reposed arose sound secure and freed of his infirmity. An other seruant of God natiue of Perugia had for two yeares

together

together ſo loſt her voyce that one could ſcarcely hear her ſpeake, but hauing vnderſtood by a viſion which ſhe had the night of the Aſſumption of our B. Lady that S. *Clare* ſhould cure her the poor afflicted creature hauing very impatiently expected the breake of the day and then with a ſtrong confidence repaired to the holy virgin and by ſignes craued her holy benediction which fauour hauing obtained her voyce which ſo long time ſhe had loſt became as cleer and ſhril as euer it had bin. An other of her Religious called *Chriſtiana* that had a long time bin deafe and hauing in vaine tryed many remedies *S. Clare* hauing made the ſigne of the croſſe vpon her head and touched her eare with her hand ſhe recouuered her hearing as perfect and cleer as euer. An other of her Religious called *Andrea* had a diſeaſe in her throat the griefe wherof procured her much impatience, ſhe feeling her ſelfe one night tormented with her infirmity more then accuſtomed afflicted and impatient that her paine did rather increaſe then diminish, ſhe ſo crushed and preſſed her throat making therby appeer her intention to choake her ſelfe thinking heerby to expell that ſwelling, and through ignorance attempting to doe more then was the will of God: but whiles that poor Religious buſied her ſelfe in that folly S. *Clare* by diuine inſpiration had knowledge therof, and calling one of her Religious ſhe ſayd vnto her goe downe ſpeedely to the cooke and cauſe her to boyle an egge and

Digitized by Google

then cauſe Siſter Andrea to ſwallow it which done bring her to me., the Religious inſtantly accomplished her commaundment and forthwith brought the egg to the ſicke party whome she found little better then dead hauing ſo crushed her throat that she could not ſpeake, yet she made her ſwallow the egg as well as she could then raiſing her vp from her ſtraw bed she with much labour lead her to *S. Clare.* who ſpake vnto her in this manner, wretched Siſter confeſſe thee to God and haue contrition for what thou intẽdedſt to doe, and acknowledge that *Ieſus Chriſt* will giue thee health much better then thou with thine owne handes hadſt propoſed to doe, change this euill life in to a better for thou ſhalt neuer recouuer an other ſicknes that ſhall ſucceed this but ſhalt dye therof; theſe wordes procured in this Religious the ſpirit of compunction and contrition ſo that she being intirly cured of this greeuous infirmity she amẽded her life: a little after an other ſicknes tooke hold of her as *S. Clare* had fortold wherof she piouſly ended her life. It doth manifeſtly appeer by theſe examples and many other marũelous things which this holy virgin wrought in virtue of this wholſome ſigne that thẽ tree of the croſſe of our B. ſauiour *Ieſus Chriſt* was deeply planted in her hart and that in an admirable manner the fruites therof did interiourly recreat her ſoule ſith the leaues did worke exteriouſly ſuch remeadies by the hands and merrits of this glorious Lady.

How

How ſainte Clare *beſought her ſuperiours that she might enioye the preſence of her ſiſter whome she beholdeth three times croẅned by an Angell.*

CHAP. XL.

S*Aint Francis* well knowing that S. *Agnes* was adorned & imbellishd with all ſort of perfection ſent her to *Florence*, to found a new monaſterie called *Mont Celi*, wherof he made her Abbeſſe; this holy virgin wonne many ſoules to abandon the world and ſerue *Chriſt Ieſus* by her holy conuerſation exemplar life & virtuous diſcourſes and as a true contemner of worldly things and imitatour of our Redeemer she planted in this monaſterie and in many others (conformable to the intention of our holy Father S. *Francis*) the Euangelicall pouerty. S. *Clare* ſeeing her ſelf aſſaulted with many infirmities and to draw neer her end deſired greatly the company of her Siſter *Agnes* the ſmall time she was to remaine in this life wherunto ſuperiours condeſcended. Wherfore B. *Agnes* hauing left her monaſtery of Florence

well founded in Religiō and sanctity and Sister Clare Vbaldus a most vertuous Religious to succeed her, she returned to the monastery of S. Damian to the exceeding great spirituall cō solation of her Sister. The prudent mother being one night in prayer saw her Sister Agnes rayſed from the ground and an Angell who at three seuerall times crowned her with three seuerall garlands or crownes, the day insuing she inquired of her what prayer or contemplation she had made the night past, Agnes through humility was vnwilling to discouuer her meditation, but being vrged ther vnto by obedience she sayd vnto her, I did consider the great bounty and clemency of Almighty God wherwith he doth support so many sinners which did excite in me an excessiue sorrow, next I did ponder the infinit loue of Iesus Christ to mankind vndergoeing death to saue him: thirdly I did consider with griefe, and compassionate the poor soules in purgatory by reason of their vnspeakable torments, and for that they can not help them selues I did in their behalfe require mercy of the sacred woundes of our Redeemer.

Of the admirable constancie of sainte Clare *in her sicknes.*

CHAP. XLI.

IF wee could well vnderstand and conceaue what good and profitt wee reape by afflictions and infirmity wee would embrace them with great affection and content, and would conserue them as pearles Iewells and pretious stones; they are the porters of heauen the forrunners of cõsolatiõ, the fauours of heauẽ, the guides of our life, & the cure & remedie of all our miseries: aduersitie doth serue vs in such sort as the hammer doth the gold smith to forge and frame his crowne, the fier doth burne the gold whiles it is in the furnace but therby it is purifyed refined and beautifyed: behold the tryall of a iust man who being cast in to the fyer of tribulation cometh forth in his thoughts more humble, in his prayers more deuout, in his conscience more pure and neat: and more constant & perseuerant in the exercise of virtue and patience, in this furnace God our Creatour would make tryall of the generositie of his beloued daughter *Clare*, for in her life time she was oppressed with sundry great maladies, but principally the space of 28. yeares, resting

continually on her ſtraw bed; remaining inuincible vnder the waight of her infirmities, with a ioyefull countenance and ſetled tranquillity acccompanyed with a meeke ſerenity: no impatient word euer eſcapeing her mouth, but rather according to the example of her Seraphicall Father who amidſt his agonie ſung moſt heauenly ditties, and vttered moſt holy wordes and Iaculatory prayers which though but breife were notwithſtanding efficacious cordiall and penetrating and knocking at the heart of God, and returning back loaden with conſolation, he felt leſſe irckſomenes in his afflictions: she neuer ſought to be freed or ſolaced in her paines and tribulations but that she might he faithful to her Creatour begging allways that her courage might be as great as her infirmity confideing allways that theſe momentary torments would ſoone begette eternity and incomparable glory, by this patience produceing the fruits of virtues which were ripened by aduerſitie and ſufferance.

How the Cardinall Protectour of the Order visited S. Clare in her sicknes.

CHAP. XLII.

Sainte Clare had most inuincibly and infatigably runne in the race of the most high Pouerty the space of forty yeares hauing broken the Alabaster of her bodye by austeare fastes disciplins and mortification, by this meanes filling the holy Church with the sweet Odour of her virtues, wherby she drew after her an infinit number of soules to the seruice of Christ Iesus, now rūning on swiftly through the course of many infirmities her corporall forces being alltogether extenuated and in a māner exhausted she seemed euery moment to draw neer her end but God intēded to honour her before her death with the presence of his Holines and the most notable Prelates of the Roman Church whose peculiar daughter she was: before all from the Citty of Perusia hastened in great diligence Reginald Cardinall of Ostia (who was afterwardes installed in the high throne of S. Peter, and called Allexander the fourth) protectour of the Order, by Office her Father, and by particular solicitude her

gouuer-

gouernour fosterer and friend in most pure and chast amitie to visit and comfort her; she be sought him with all submission to administer vnto her the most B. sacramēt of the Eucharist who haueing condescended to her deuotion she was replenished with ioye, and her heart like to haue flowen into an eternall extasie, haueing receaued him whom she cherrished a thousand times more then her owne life, darting forth words so inflamed with the loue of God, that all there present dissolued in to teares. Then the worthy Prelate propounded an exhortation to the Religious Woemen. S. *Clare* besought him with great humility and in the name of our Redeemer *Christ Iesus*, to take into his protection that her Familie and all other poor Sisters of her Order. But principally she besought him with abundance of teares to obtaine of the Pope & the Colleadge of Cardinalls the confirmation of the priuileadge of holy pouerty assureing him that she should dye with exceeding content if she might receaue that fauour before her departure: which the Cardinall did promise her and did execute as a faithfull protectour of her Religion, for being come to Perusia he declared to the supreame Pastour the indispofition of his daughter and her most pious requeſt: the Vicar of *Iesus Christ* granted all, and gaue vnto him licence by Apostolicall authority to confirme the desire of the virgin as appeereth by the letters patents the which he presently sent

vnto

vnto her. It is in this manner: Reginald by the the grace of God Bishopp of Hostia and of Veletre to his most deer mother and daughter in *Iesus Christ* Clare, *Abbesse* of *saint Damians* at *Assisium* and to her Religious both present and to come, health and Fatherly benediction for so much as you my deer daughters in *Christ Iesus* contemning the pompes and delights of the world, and following the Footsteps of *Iesus Christ* and his holy mother haue chosen to be Corporally inclosed to serue God, wee prayseing your holy resolution will with our Fatherly affection curteously graunt vnto you your desire and holy requests, and therfore inclineing to your pious supplications wee confirme by the Popes authority and ours for you and all those that shall succeed you in your monasterie the forme and Rule of life by the meanes of a holy vnion, and of the most high and sublime Pouerty: which the holy Father *saint Francis* hath giuen you to obserue both by word and by writing.

How Pope Innocent the fourth visited saincte Clare before her death and of a notable miracle done in his presence.

CHAP. XLIII.

THis generous seruant of *Christ Iesus* being more assaulted with sicknes then accustomed, a sword of sorrow pierced the hearts of her daughters in such sort as they dissolued into teares sighing and lamenting fearing euery moment to be depriued of her most gratefull presence: but God had otherwise disposed as it was declared by vision to a very deuout Religious Woman of the monastery of *Saint Paule* of the Order of *S. Benedict*, it seemed vnto her that she and all her Religious Sisters did visit the holy mother *Clare* at the Conuent of *S. Damian* who lay in a rich and magnificent bed about which they stood all weeping and lamenting expecting her death: and that in the meane time there drew neer to her beds-head a most beautifull woeman, who sayd vnto them, my daughters weep not for her who shall yet liue: for she can not dye vntill our Lord with all his disciples doe arriue, the succesſe hath declared the truth of

a the

the oracle for towardes the latter end of the yeare 1252. Pope Innocēt the fourth repreſenting *Ieſus Chriſt* vpon earth in his millitant Church, and the Lords Cardinalls repreſenting the diſciples of our Redeemer did expreſſly depart from Peruſia and came to *Aſſiſium* to viſit this holy damſell, the ſupreame Bishop not doubting but she whoſe life he had already approued Was the moſt perfect in ſanctity of all woemen in her time and by conſequence worthy to haue her death honored with his preſence: being entred with fower Cardinalls and fower Freer Minours diſciples of the Seraphicall Father in to the chamber where this Celeſtiall Doue did repoſe, coming to her bed he gaue her his hand to kiſſe she receaued this fauour with great content, and beſought him with all reuerence she might alſo haue the fauour to kiſſe his Apoſtolicall Feet, the Pope to ſatisfy her deuotion ſatt downe vpon a little bench and then preſented her his Feet vpon which this holy Saint reuerently layed her face and her mouth moſt affectionatly kiſſeing them: then with an Angelicall ſerenity she demaunded of him remiſſion of all her ſinnes, the Pope anſwered: I would to God my daughter that I needed no greater pardon when I ſhall come to dye: in fine he gaue vnto her the benefit of abſolution, and his benediction: his holines having a long time conferred with S. *Clare* hearing from her mouth as from the ſecretary of the holy ghoſt heauenly and diuine

Digitized by Google

doctrine, bread was brought both for her refe ction and for all the Religious, she beſought the Pope to bleſſe the bread, the ſouueraigne Bishop ſayd vnto her, my daughter *Clare* I will haue you to bleſſe it your ſelfe makeing ther vpon the ſigne of the holy croſſe; the ſaint re plyed, holy Father pardon me if you pleaſe: for if I ſhall doe it I ſhould be worthy of repre henſion, preſuming to giue a bleſſing in the preſence of your holynes, wher to he anſwered well my daughter that no preſumption be im puted vnto you but that you may merrit by it, I commaund you by holy obedience to bleſſe theſe loaues makeing vpon them the ſigne of the holy croſſe she blushed exceedingly to ſee her ſelfe commaunded by the vicar of Chriſt in preſence of the Cardinalls whoſe eyes were all fixed vpon her admireing her rare modeſtie: but conſidering she was compelled after she had eleuated her eyes and hart to heauen to in uocate the holy ghoſt as an obedient daughter she lifted vp her hand and bleſſed them: it was admirable for the croſſe remained imprint ed vpon euery one of theſe loaues, and the loafe which the ſaint was to eat brake and de uided it ſelfe in to fower peeces in forme of a croſſe: part of that bread was eaten through deuotion and the reſt conſerued for reliques, and the Pope remained much amazed and gaue thankes to God; her minde being not yet ſatisfyed with the letters pattents giuen by Apoſtolicall authority by the protectour

of the

of the Order concerning the priuiledge of pouerty she besonght his holines in all humility and submission to graunt her an expresse Bull which he promised her; but afterwards perceaming this fauour to be deferred (for the sounerayne Bishop thought all wayes to induce *Saint Clare* not to bind her Religious to such an extreame pouerty) fearing that after her death all would be buried in obliuion a little before her departure she sent a man expresse to the holy sea Apostolick beseeching him to confirme her demand, the Pope seeing her perseuerance and last will granted her request the tenth yeare of his Popedome according to the pattents specifyed in the 11. Chapter which were deliuered vnto her three dayes before her death which she receaued and kissed them with great ioye for as a true louer of pouery she languished after this fauour. The Vicar of *Iesus Christ* being departed, and hauing receaued the same morning the sacred communion, at the handes of the Reuerend Father Prouincial: the diuine clemencie did yet further augment her consolation for the virtuous Religious Sister *Francis* did behold a globe effyer to conuert in to a most beautifull child standing close by the holy virgin, comforting and cherrishing her with vnspeakable sweetnes to reioyce her heart, then with her handes ioyned and her eyes eleuated to heauen; weeping she sayd to her Religious:

my daughters prayse and magnify God for the ineſtimable fauour and benefit which he hath vouchſafed to doe me it being ſo great that heauen and earth is not able to acknowledge it, for this day I haue receaued God my Creatour and haue merited to ſee his Vicar vpon earth. The foreſayd Siſter *Francis* doth depoſe that she did ſee vpon the ſolemnity of the holy Apoſtles S. *Phillipp* and *Iames* a moſt glorious and beautifull child who ſtanding vpon the lapp of the ſainte held ouer her head twoe shineing and refulgent wings, which ſome times he raiſed vpwards other whiles letting them fall dowe a gaine they couered after an admirable manner the head and shoulders of S. *Clare*.

Sainte Clares *patience in her ſickneſs. And how she comforted her Siſter* Agnes.

CHAP. LXIV.

AFter the aboue mentioned viſitations she was wonderfully oppreſſed with infirmity from the beginning of the month of December vntill the month of Auguſt which she indured with ſuch patience and conſtancie that ther neuer eſcaped her mouth the leaſt word of

com-

Digitized by Google

complaint how violent soeuer her torments were; yea haueing bin seauenteene dayes without being able to take any sustenance which could be presented vnto her she was notwithstanding so fortifyed with diuine grace that she excited and stirred vp all those who visited her to be dilligent in the seruice of God giueing them such fitt instructions as if she had penetrated in to their very harts so directly she hitt the mark and touched their wounds. As her life decayed and drew towardes an end Brother *Renauld* of the Order of S. *Francis* a man of singular perfection spake vnto her certaine deuout wordes animating her to indure courragiously the last assaults, and to beare with patience her greeuous sicknes which did so torment her: she answered him with a smileing countenance and cleere voyce: O my Brother how much am I obliged to my Saviour and Redeemer *Christ Iesus* for since that by the meanes of his great seruãt *Francis* I haue tasted the bitternes of his dolorous Passion I haue neuer in my whole life found paine which could afflict me, nor euill that could hurt me, nor infirmity how great soeuer that can contristate me; for ther is nothing insupportable to a hart that loueth God and to him that loueth not, all is insupportable: her delight was to speake of God the vanity of the world, death and the recompence of the blessed her Religious stood about ther mother, of whom within a short space they should be orphans,

neither

neither sleep nor the takeing of their other ne-
cessities could separate them from her compa-
ny, for the comfort they tooke in her pre-
sence made them forgett all those commodi-
ties, in particular her deer Sister *Agnes* was
wounded with sorrow and greife, being thus
vehemently afflicted she earnestly besought
her Sister Clare not to forsake her but as they
had bin linckted together in loue and affection
so they might not be separated by horrid death
beseeching the diuine maiesty, that she might
be deliuered from the bondes of this miserable
bodye. This heauenly doue loueing her as her
owne hart and as the apple of her eye, answe-
red her; my deer Sister whom I loue most cor-
dially since it is the will of God I should de-
part, remaine you heer ioyfull and weepe not,
for I assure you our Lord will come very soone
to visit you with an vnspeakable consolation
before your death, Which came to passe the 27.
day following: for our Redeemer (as the spou
se of the Espouse) appeered vnto her graciously
beholding her and and giueing her a tast of the
eternall Felicity, (according to the prophesie
of her Sister *Clare*) before her death, inuiteing
her to the wedding of the lambe the yeare
1253. the 16. of nouember, 56. of her age,
compleat in all perfection: God hath manife-
sted the glory of her soule by a number of mi-
racles which haue bin wrought at her tombe.

Of

Of the spirit of Prophecie in sainte Clare *and how she was visited by the Religious of* Florence.

CHAP. XLV.

SAinte *Clare* was adorned with the spirit of propheſie which appeared in ſeueral occaſions & firſt the Seraphical Father ſending once fiue noble damſells vnto her to be admitted amongſt the number of her diſciples, she addmitting fower refuſed the fifth by name called *Caſiam Thatholta* who with great inſtancie beſought *ſainte Clare* to admitt her in like ſort but the ſainte foretold her she would proue vnconſtant and not perſeuer with them, but the damſell vrgeing the ſainte to proceed more affectionatly and ſeriouſly with her, affirmeing by oath that she would perſeuer among them wherfore ſurmounted with her importunity she admitted her but before a yeare was expired she returned to the world, prouing the propheſie of S. *Clare* to be true. One Hugoline *Peeter Gicordonis* a noble man of *Aſiſium* after he had bin foolish twoe and twentie yeares & parted from his wife *Guiduccium* who was very vpious she foretold they should liue againe

Digitized by Google

very peaceably together and be comforted with a fine child which came to passe according to her prophesie as the man him selfe testifyed in the processe of her Canonization. Her Religious kneeling round about her bed powring forth riuers of teares, for greefe of her departure, she turning towardes them sayd: my daughters; go meet your Sisters coming frō the monasterie neer florence to visit me in my last sicknes goe speedely for they stay at the gate & haueing refected and refreshed them bring them in to me *vt benedicat eas anima mea antequam moriar*; that my soule may blesse them before I dye: they were receaued by *saint Clare* with great ioye and consolation and she gaue vnto them a vayle which she ordinarily wore which they carryed with them to their monastery of florence where it is yet kept by the Religious of the sayd monastery for a Relique, this Conuent hath since bin built and established in the City. It is a thing very ordinarily seene that the wordes of dying parents do take a great impression in the hearts of the children and are retained as oracles, the glorious virgin & mother *S. Clare* with a smileing looke and Angelicall countenance gaue vnto her Religious a thousand heauenly documents recōmending to her holy Familie al sort of rare virtues in particular the loue of God and their neighbour, obedience to superiours, and the strict and sublime pouerty: she foretold them what should befall them after her death then

ioyning

ioyning her handes in forme of a crosse she gaue her holy benediction to all her Religious both present and absent.

The Benediction of S. Clare.

IN the name of the most holy Trinity Amen. My deerly beloued Sisters our Lord giue you his Benediction and behold you with the eye of his mercy giueing you his peace, as also to all those who shall enter and perseuer in our Colledge & monastery & allso into all other monasteries of the Order who shall perseuer vnto the end in the most holy pouerty. I *Clare* seruant of *Iesus Christ* and little plant of our holy Father S. *Frances* your mother and Sister allthough vnworthy doe beseech our Redeemer by the intercession of his most holy mother, of the Archangell *S. Michaell* and the holy Angells, of our holy Father S. *Francis* and all the holy saints, that he will giue and confirme vnto you this Benediction in heauen and in earth, in earth multiplying in you his holy grace, and in heauen exalting you with his saintes: I giue you my benediction whiles I am yet in this life, & after my death,

as much as I am able, and more then I am able. Amen.

How many persons of note and disciples of saint Francis *assisted at* sainte Clares *death.*

CHAP. XLVI.

THe deuotion and affection which euery one bore vnto her did dayly increase in such manner as she was honored for a saint, being frequently visited by Cardinalls, Bishopps, and other Prelates, and as God drew neerer vnto her and that her soule was ready to depart, this holy virgin desired that some of the most holiest and spirituallest Freer Minors should assist and be present to discourse vnto her of the passion of our Redeemer; the more to inflame her in his holy loue by their pious exhortations: amongst others Brother Iuniperus disciple to S. *Francis* came fittly to the purpose S. *Clare* loued him singularly for his great sanctity and familiarity with God, (he was called the Archer of *Iesus Christ* by reason of his wordes so inflamed in diuine loue which penetrated to the harts of the hearers like inflamed darts) he entertained her with such infla-

med

med discourses of her Creatour that this good Lady fild with ioy at the sight of him demãded if he knew no new thing of God: brother Iu nipere answered sparkling forth such sublime feruour that she remained fully satisfyed and content. Finally turning her Angelicall face towardes her deerly beloued daughters and Sisters who stood there powring forth abũdance of teares, she recommended vnto them in this her last passadge the most holy powerty, yeelding thankes vnto allmighty God for the manifold benefits which she had receaued from his diuine maiesty, relating many in particular, then she gaue againe her benediction to all the Religious of her monastery both present and absent and to all those that should enter in to her order: there were also present two companyons of S. *Francis*, Brother Angell comforting the assembly and the most innocent brother Leo who ceased not to kisse the bed of the damsell ready to abandone this world; her daughters bewayling at her Feet accompanying her soule vnto heauen with teares and lamẽtations finding no consolation but in desire to accompany her.

moſt magnificently adorned wearing on her head a moſt pretious diademe beſett with pearles, Rubies, and a brightnes ſo refulgent that it changed the darknes of the night into cleere day, this was the mother of God queene and Empreſſe of heauen, who with a maieſticall but ſmileing countenance went directly to the pure and innocent virgin *Clare* who lay in agonie; and embraceing her tenderly she gaue her the kiſſe of peace; and to aſſigne her to appeere perſonally in glory she brought with her a Robe or garment of ineſtimable value which this ſouueraigne Ladye gaue vnto this heauenly damſell that she might adorne her ſelfe therwith to meete her heauenly Spouſe according to this ſaying of *ſaint Iohn*. The wedding of the Lamb is come and the time ſet downe for the celebratiō therof, & the Eſpouſe is cloathed in rich garments white as ſnow. Which wee ſee fulfilled in this happy virgin, for *Chriſt Ieſus* ſent vnto her by the handes of his ſacred mother the ornaments wherin she was preſent her ſelfe at the feaſt. What ioye & cōfort did her ſoule then feele, what heauenly ſecurity what extraordinary iubilie, what ſpirituall grace what certainty & pledges of eternall glory did she then receaue. Amidſt theſe ſweet embracements she yealded vp her holy, beautifull, and happy ſoule in to the armes of her Creatour couuered with Laurells and loaden with Palmes tryumphantly to enter into the Celeſtiall Kingdome, ſeruing her ſelfe

with death as a footstoole to step to eternall felicity, changing her haire-cloath for a stole of immortality, poueрty for euerlasting riches, pennance for perpetuall ioy & happines, for her fasting in this exile she is now satiated at the magnificent table of the heauenly inhabitants and for the villity and humility of her garments she is resplendetly reuested with glory, her continuall inteſſant sighes and desires panting after the presence of her beloued are now fullfilled by the B. Vision of God and by the happy fruition of the souueraigne good; leauing vs an open way w'erby the example of her sanctity wee blind and miserable wretches may forsake the breife transitory and deceiptfull pleasures, and may pursue the permanent true and euerlasting.

Of the honorable Obsequies of saint Clare.

CHAP. XLVIII.

THe soule of *S. Clare* hauing left this mortall life the rumour of her death was presently diuulged ouer all the City of *Assisium*, from whence both men and woemen came flocking with great concourse to the monastery in such sort as the City seemed to be

How S. Clare was visited by our Redeemer and his glorious virgin Mother and of her B. departure.

CHAP, XLVII.

SAinctc Clare the B. Espouse of Christ Iesus being curiously elaborated and rarely carued and made fitt by the blowes of tribulation, temptation, and infirmity, as a firme and liuing stone which was to be placed in a principall corner of the celestiall Hierusalem, the cold sweat mounting to her forhead and the painfull gripes and pangs of death knocking at the gate of her heart; she heard the sweet voyce of her souueraigne Redeemer calling her to him selfe, her soule being now euen ready to depart with great tranquillity: she spake most sweetly to her B. soule saying, goe confidently my soule goe securely for thou hast a good guid to conduct thee through this voyage, for he who hath created thee hath sanctifyed, and hath allwayes conserued thee affecting thee with a tender loue equall with that of a mother towards her child, and thou my God be praysed for hauing created me. Sister *Anastasia* asked of her to whome it was she spake: to whome she replyed saying I speake to my B. soule which hath bene preuented with

the

the benedictions of our Lord: brother *Iunipere* begining to read the Passion of our Redeemer (which was the Manuel of this Virgin) *Christ Iesus* her glorious and triumphant Spouse appeared vnto her in Royall maiesty refulgent as the sunne bearing in his aspect the beauty and ornament of heauen darting forth rayes of diuine glory, he with a smileing countenance inuited her to the company of his Espouses. *S. Clare* was so transported with ioye as it was admirable her heart did not breake therwith and her soule take her flight to the heauenly mansions, she disposed her selfe thervnto and called her coffin Sister *Agnes* and sayd vnto her my daughter doe you not behold the king of glory whom I see, behold there is my beloued spouse who doth inuite me to eternall mansiõs and to the Pallace of the immortall wedding; now in the meane while she darted forth inflamed affections towards her beloued; breathing after nothing but to be dissolued from this body and to be sett free from this troublesome captiuity that she might take her flight vnto heauen. Sister *Benauenta* being transperced with a dart of sorrow casting her sight to the chamber doore she saw with her corporall eyes to enter in an honorable Procession of Virgins most richly cloathed in white garments, euery one wearing on her head a crowne of gold beset with pearles and glittering starres, among them was one who seemed to be the Empresse, surpassing in maiesty and

most

forsaken and left empty, thither came the officers of iustice with great store of armed men who guarded the monastery that night for feare least that rich treasure should be taken from them: the City of *Assisium* delegated certaine persons of account to his holines in the City of *Perusium*. He residing there both by reason of Calamities of the Church as allso, to expect the diuine ordination concerning the departure of his daughter *Clare* whom he loued with a tender and Fatherly affection esteeming her to be the most holyest damsell of her time, and desireing to be present at her obsequies haueing heard the newes he departed from Perusia with all his Court and comeing to *Assisium* the day following he entred into the monastery of S. *Damian* where he contemplated her dead (whom he had visited in her sicknes) sheading abundance of teares through deuotion beholding the beautifull face of this heauenly inhabitant, they lifted vp her bodye. and with torches, wax tapers and boughs with all reuerence and deuotion they carryed her in to the Church, where the office was celebrated by the Cardinalls and Cleargie in the presence of Pope Innocent the fourth and an incredible number of Prelates, Abbots, Lords, and persons of quality who flocked thither to exibitt this last dutie and honour to S. *Clare*, the Cantores beginning the office of the dead the Pope would haue had the office of virgins manifestinga desire to Canonize her before her bodye

was

was interred. But Arnould Cardinall of *Hostia* and Protector of the Order aduised him that notwithstanding that the commaundement of his holines was iust by reason of her singular merrits, yet it was better that that should be done with more deliberation & counsel. The Pope then permitted them to prosecute solemnly the office of the dead according to the custome; the sayd Cardinall of *Hostia* made the Funerall Sermon hauing taken for his theame *Vanitas vanitatum & omnia vanitas*, declareing the vanity of honour riches pleasures and delights of this World highly extolling the wise and noble despiser of all vanities he might very pertinently discourse as eye-witnes of the illustrious actions of this most renowned virgin hauing forcible argumēts wherwith to moone the harts and eyes of his auditours to teares of deuotion by his Oration. The Funeralls being very honorably concluded: the Cittizens of *Assisium* thought it not conuenient that this inestimable Iewell and pretious threasure should be so farre distant from their Citte they caused this holy bodye to be transported with great pompe singing Psalmes and Himnes accompanyed with the harmonie of sundrie musicall instruments and solemne procession carrying it to the Church of S. *George* where the bodie of S. *Francis* had first been layed. It being very conuenient that he who in his life had directed her should also prepare the place of her sepulcher; there was then a great concourse and

Digitized by Google

multitudes of people flocking from sundry Cities townes and villages about *Assisium* to giue thankes vnto God and to proclaime this Virgin a glorious sainte who now liueth and raigneth with God and his Angells, and therfore deserueth to be honored by men vpon earth. O glorious Ladye pray now for vs and gaine our soules to God as thou hast drawne many vnto him liueing in this world. *Sainte Clare* passed from this life to the next the yeare of our Lord 1253. the 11. of August the 42. yeare after her vocation to Religion, and the 60. of her age, she was buried the 12. vpon which day the Church doth solemnise her festiuitie.

Of the Canonization of S. Clare.

CHAP. XLIX.

POpe *Innocent* the fourth hauing beene very familiar with S. *Clare* whiles she liued in this vale of teares, visiting her in her last sicknes, seene her after her death, and assisted at her Funerells, and knowne her for a Paragon of saints in her time, he much desired to Canonize her: for this subiect the 18. of october the same yeare 1153. he gaue expresse

preſſe commiſſion to *Bartholmew* Bishop of *Spoletum* to examine her life, perfections, and miracles, who with *Leonard Arch*-Deacon of *Spoletum*, *Iames Arch*-*Prieſt*, Brother *Leo* heertofore Confeſſour to the Seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, Brother Angell of *Rieta* one of the twelue firſt diſciples of the ſayd ſaint. And Brother *Marck* Confeſſour of the Religious woemen of S. *Damian* did proſecute and perfect the proceſſe by Acts of publicke notaries and an infinit number of witneſſes worthy of Faith and credit, which they preſented to the vicar of *Ieſus Chriſt* vpon earth, at the beginning of the yeare following. But the Pope conſtrained to take his iourney towardes Naples for the pregnant affaires of the Church, loaden with age, labour and perſecutions and full of merits, he was ſtroken by death, bowing to the rigour of this cruell Law the 25. of December the yeare 1254. yealding vp his ſoule to God and his body to the earth in the Conuent of the Freer Minors in the City of Naples, to the great greife and detriment of the Church. *Regenauld* Cardinall and Bishop of *Hoſtia*, ſucceeded Innocent the fourth in the chaire of *S. Peeter*, and was called Allexander the fourth, vnderſtãding that the renowne of the ſaint did dayly augment and that euery one deſired her Canoniſation he made choiſe of perſons of great authority, prudence, and learning, to examine her life and merits, and being duely informed how this virgin had

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1254. §. 11.

bin irreprehẽsible in her actions and a moſt bright mirrour of virtue and perfection, and that God had ſealed the eminency of her holy life by an infinit number of true and approued miracles he ordained and ſett downe a day for her Canoniſation wherat were aſſembled with his holines many Cardinalls Arch Bishops, Bishops, Prelates and great number of Prieſtes, and Religious men; with a great number of Lords knights and gentlemen, and others of lower rãck; before whome the Pope propounded this holy ſubiect, demaunding therin aduiſe of the Prelates, who with one accord conſented and beſought that this Ladie might be Canoniſed in the Church ſith Ieſus *Chriſt* had illuſtrated her in heauen. In this ſort then two yeares after her deceaſe Pope Alexander did inrole her in the Cata logue of ſaintes: ordaineing that her feaſt ſhould be ſolemniſed on the twelft day of Auguſt, this Canoniſation was celebrated with all magnificency in the City of *Anagnie* in the great Church: the yeare 1255. and the firſt yeare of the Popedome of the ſayd Pope; to the prayſe and glory of our ſouueraine Creatour and mercifull Redeemer.

Luc. Wadd. annum. 255 §. 15

Of

Of the tranſlation of the bodyes of S. Francis and S. Clare, with other particulars.

CHAP. L.

THe glorious Father S. *Francis* a louer of humility and contempt of himſelfe, euer deſired that his bodie after his death might be buried in the moſt vile and abiect place of *Aſsiſium*, he was not fruſtrated of his demaund or propheſie, for Pope *Gregorie* the ninth coming to *Aſsiſium* for the Canoniſation of the ſayd ſaint, the yeare 1228. he cauſed to be built a famous temple to his honour laying himſelfe the firſt ſtone in the preſence of a great multitude of people, in the moſt abiect and contemptible place of the City which was called the mount of *Hell* where malefactours were executed, but ſince it is called the mount of *Heauen*, contributing towards this building the greateſt part of his reuenues in the valley of *Spoletum*. The yeare 1230. the ſame Pope cauſed to be aſſembled the General Chapter of the Order of Freer Minors in the City of *Aſsiſium* and cauſed to be published ouer all Europe the tranſlation of the bodie of *ſunt Francis* from the Church of S. *George* where it

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1230. §. 1.

had

had repoſed the ſpace of fower yeares to the new Church built to the honour of the ſaint, thether came aboue two thouſand Religious men and ſaint *Anthonie of Padua* amongſt the reſt, and of ſeculars of all degrees and qualities the number was innumerable who reſorted thether from all quarters, in ſuch ſort as the City being not able to containe them they were compelled to retire into the fields vnder tents and pauillions, they now all expected with great deuotion the arriual of his Holines according to his promiſe: he ſent his expreſſe Apoſtolicall Nunces both to plead his excuſe for that he did not come himſelfe in perſon for ſome law full impediments which hindered him: and to adorne this new Church with a great croſſe of gold inriched with many pretious ſtones of ineſtimable value wherin there was inchaſſed a great peece of the true croſſe, and allſo many other ornaments and rich veſſels to embellish the high Altar, and other rich donaries, beſides a large Alines to defray all charges and to perfect the worke, the tranſlation was celebrated the 25. of May. The yeare 1230. in moſt magnificent Pompe, the holy bodie ſigned with the ſeale of our Redemption was placed in a Chappell vnder ground as it is declared in the 29. Chapter; this ſolemnity was moſt illuſtrious by many miracles which God wrought in fauour of the ſaint. But to the end that the temple of *S. George* wherin this ineſtimable Iewell had repoſed might euer be in

Luc. Wad. ad annum. 1230. parag. 2.

great

great honour the Supreame Bishop by Apostolicall authority gaue it to his beloued daughter *Clare*, ordaining expressely for this end his Procuratour to build a new Church with a monasterie thervnto adioyning for the Religious woemen of S. *Damian* for the greater commodity and safety of their persons this Conuent was not yet perfected in the time of *S. Clare* by reason of the cruell warres ouer all Italie but especially in the valley of Spoletum subiect to the Church, by *Fredericke* the second sworne enemy therof. The year 1260. the building of S. *Georges* being finished at the Popes cost fitt to lodge therin the Religious woemen, & the owtward part to repose the holy bodye of this diuine Damosell, Pope Alexander the fourth commanded the Bishops of *Perusia Spoletum* and *Assisium* to transport the holy bodye from the Church of S. *Damian* to the new one founded to her honour, which was performed the third of October in the presence of a number of Prelates Abbatts and Religious men, and great store of secular who resorted from all partsin great concourse led by extreame deuotion, they were ready to stifle each other being neuer satiated with kissing & embraceing these Odoriferous Reliques. The Religious daughters of S. *Clare* leaueing the monasterie of S. *Damian* followed their mother to liue in the new monastery of S. *George*, carrying with them the Crucifix which spake to S. *Francis* in the begining of his conuersion,

with many other holy Bodyes and Relickes; the litle Conuent of *Saint Damians* doth at this present belong to the Fathers of S. *Francis* of the Reformation. Note good reader that ther is great likelihood according to our authour of specifyed, that this sacred depositum hath bin Seuerall times transported, first from S. *Damians* to S. *George* in the City of *Assisium* after the solemne Funeralls celebrated in presence of his Holines and his whole Court. Two yeares after from S. *Georges* againe to S. *Damian* whiles a more magnificent Church was a building it being needful to demolish the precedent. Finally fiue yeares after that to the new and magnificent Chhurch built to the honour of this glorious Ladye. The yeare 1265. Pope Clement the fifth exceedingly deuoted to the Order of S. *Clare* came expressely to *Assisium* to visit her Church: he caused it to be blessed within and without by Cardinall *Rodulphus* Bishop of *Alba*, and he himself consecrated the high Allter, vnder which reposed the body of S. *Clare*, and Cardinall Steephen consecrated the allter dedicated to the honour of the holy saints *George*, *Cosme*, and *Damian*, with great solemnity and concourse of People, vpon Sunday the first of September.

Digitized by Google

Mirabilis Deus in Sanctis suis. *Psalm. 67.*

Bulle of the Canonization of S. Clare.

CHAP. LI.

ALexander Bishop seruant of the seruants of God to our venerable Brethren the Arch-bishops Bishops &c. Health and Apostolicall benediction: It being manifest that noble and renowned S. *Clare* doth shine both in heauen and in earth by the meanes of her glorious merits, with great honour and store of miracles by her perfect life in Religion and the supereminence of the eternall recompences, and doth shine heer on earth discouering vertue most cleerly by sundry signes, and because whiles liuing in this world was giuē vnto her the title and priuiledge of holy Pouerty, and is repayed her in heauen with incomparable treasure, and on earth with honour reuerence and deuotion of all Catholicke Christiā people: this Virgin *Clare* by her bright workes is become resplendent and with fullnes of diuine light is most illustrious among Christians. O sacred Virgin adorned with so many titles of brightnes and light! before her Conuersion bright, in her conuersion

moſt bright, in Religion much more bright; & after the courſe of this preſent liſe moſt refulgent bright. This Virgin was a bright mirour of all virtue, and from the ſweet Lilly of her virginall purity is diffuſed a moſt odoriferous ſent in Heauen, being vpon earth a powerfull aſſiſtant of the needy. O admirable *Clare* who the more wee contemplate thee in all theſe things the more wee find thee admirable and reſplendent in euery one, in the world cleer and bright, in the Cloiſter a cleer Lampe, in the houſe a bright beame, in Religion moſt reſplendent, in her life a glittering ſtarre, in her death a moſt refulgent Sunne; giueing light vpon earth and ſhineing in heauen. O how great is the force of her light, and how ſparekling and glittering her ſplendour. This light was hidden and shutt vp in the Cloiſter of Religion and shined forth, retired into a ſtraight monaſtery, and knowne ouer all the vniuers: she was shutt vp in ſecret, but her bright life did publish her, she was ſilent and her renowne did ſpeake, she was hidden in her Cell and knowne throughout Citties, wee need not meruaile and wonder at this for a torch ſo great and bright could not be without ſplendour and light in the houſe of our Lord: this veſſell replenished with aromaticall perfumes could not be ſo cloſe shutt vp but it would inbaulme and diffuſe an odoriferous ſẽt through the whole houſe of God: and although in the ſtraight ſolitude of her Cloiſter she did

bruſe

bruse and breake the Alabaster of her body: ne uertheles she did diffuse ouer al the Palace of the Catholicke Church an Odour of sanctity: being yet a young damoselle in the World she laboured in her tender yeares to dispise and cõtemne vanities, and preserue the treasure of her virginity, exercising her selfe in such sort in the workes of piety and the loue of God that from her proceeded a gratfull renowne accõpanyed with excellẽt prayses. This being come to the eares of S. *Francis* he began to instruct her & aduance her in perfection & the seruice of God, and harkening attentiuely to the doctrine of the saint, desiring to renounce the world and the pompes therof and to follow *Christ Iesus* in voluntary pouerty immediatly effecting the intense feruour of her desires and that she might be more perfect she distributed to the poore and needy all her riches, in this manner makeing her flight from the world & going to a Church in the fieldes, her haire was cutt of by S. *Francis* she was consecrated to God, and placed in an other Church from whence her kindred laboured much to withdraw her, but she cleaued so fast to the Altar that she drew after her the ornaments therof, and shewing to her kindred her haire cutt of, she resolutly resisted them saying that hauing dedicated her heart to the seruice of God her soule could not be separated from him, in fine she was led by the holy Father to the Church of S. *Damian* forth of the City of *Assisium* wher-

Digitized by Google

of she was natiue, where our Lord adioyned to her some companions, to the end they might coniointly liue in the continuall prayses of their heauenly spouse *Christ Iesus*. From this Virgin had her beginning the sacred Order of the poore *Clares* now spread ouer all the world this Espouse of *Christ Iesus* by the counseile of *saint Francis* gaue a begining to this new obseruance; she was the first stone and foundatiõ of this great Religion, being by race noble, but far more noble and generous by her conuersiõ allways conseruing her virginity to God as she had dedicated it to him; after this her mother *Hortulana* considering the singular works of her daughter entred into the same Religion and as a good gardiner (who in the garden of our Lord had grafted such a plant) she finished happely her life, the Virgin *Clare* after much importunity and to obey *Saint Francis* accepted the gouuernment of her monastery and was made Abbesse: she was the high tree seene frõ a farre couered with long boughs, bearing to the Church the sauourous fruits of Religion: she was the tree full of so many delights which inuited and doth inuite so many damsells to runne and tast the fruit therof vnder the sweetnes of her shade; this was the new and most cleare Valley of *Spoleta* which giueth to drinke of the new fountaine of liuing waters to refresh and profit soules she is the fountaine deuided into many streames watering our holy mother the Church and produceing sundry

plants

plants of Religion; she was the high Candlesticke of sanctity so bright and cleer in the house of God that to her brightnes haue runne and doe runne many to light their Lampes at her light: It was she who in the feild of the Catholicke Faith hath planted the noble and most high Vine of pouerty from whence are gathered the rich fruits of saluation in great abundãce: it is she who in the meddow of the Church hath planted the garden inuironed with the hedges of humility, and beset with all rigour and asperity wherin is found plenty of all virtue she is the abridgment of the Cloister who with an artificiall art doth build the high and narrow tower of abstinence wherin is prepared the spirituall viand of pleasant and delectable refection: she is the Princesse of the poore, the Ducheſſe of the humble, mistresse of the continent, and mother of the penitent: this holy virgin gouuerned her monastery, and Familie with much prudence in the feare and seruice of God, and in the perfect obseruance of the Order, prouident in her thoughts, common in all seruice and labour, in counseile most prudent, in admonition diligent, in correction temperate; in commaũding moderate, to compassion very sensible: discret in silence graue & in aduised speech, very wise and circũspect in all things appertaining to gouuerment: rather desiring to serue thẽ to be serued, to honour others thẽ to be honored in such sort that her life was to others an instruction: learning on the booke of her life the Rule and square of their

life, obſeruing as in a bright looking glaſſe their actions and workes. This holy virgin liued with her bodye vpon earth, but her ſoule was conuerſant in heauē: O veſſell of humility, O pledge of chaſtity, O flame of charity, O ſweetnes of benignity: fortreſſe of patience band of peace, cōmon to all, ſweet in wordes, meeke in workes, and beloued and ſought of euery one. And the more to macerate the flesh her enemye, and fortify her ſpirit she reſted on the bare ground: her bed being oft times the cuttings of Vines haueing a blocke of wood for her pillow, her garment was one habbitt & one cloake of groſſe and vile cloath, contenting her ſelfe to couuer her tender bodye with this attire, she wore a rude haire cloath and Cilice wouen of horſe-haire, in eating and drinking she was ſo abſtinent as a long time she was obſerued not to eat any thing 3. dayes in the week: to wit mundayes wenſedays and Frydayes, the other dayes she tooke ſmall refection, ſo as the Religious were amazed how she mantained life: she employed the greateſt part of her time in watching & prayer: being allmoſt continually ſicke being not able to riſe to labour according to her deſire and cuſtome, she aroſe by the help of her Siſters and being ſtayed vp by them, she performed ſome handy worke to exclude Idlenes. Her worke was to make corporalls for the ſeruice of the Alter ſending them in preſents to the poore Churches and congregations about

ſiſiu

sissum: she was peculiarly inamoured and a curious obseruer of pouerty, it being so deeply ingrauen in her hart as dayly she became more resolute and inflamed towardes it: so strictly embraceing it as no necessity or want whatsoeuer could euer separate her from it: and would neuer consent by any counsell or aduise that her monastery should enioye any thing proper, allthough Pope Gregory the Ninth our predeceessour of happy memory would haue giuen her possessions for her selfe and her Religious. Now for that such a bright light could not be hid with out spreading forth the Rayes of her beauty, she was illustrious for for many miracles: she restored voyce to a Religious of her monastery who could not be heard speake: and hearing to one that was deafe, she cured the impediment of the toung: one of a dropsie, a Freer Minor of a Frenzie diuers others makeing vpon them the signe of the crosse. An other time Oyle being wanting to the monastery she called the Brother whose office it was to begg and gaue him a vessell which the Religious Brother by the diuine goodnes and mercy founde full. An other day it happened that the Religious woemen had in all the howse but one halfe loafe, glorious S. *Clare* commaunded the Sisters to diuide that litle bread amongst them, and in the handes of the Dispenciер who distributed it, he who is the liueing bread & in the desart fed the hungrie multiplyed in such sort this loafe that ha-

neing made 50. portions according to the number of Religious they were all sufficiently satiated and refected; by meanes of these signes and many other miracles wrought in her life was manifested the preeminencie of her merits. Now the virgin drawing neer to the end of her life she was visited with a resplendent company of virgins amongst whom there was one more glittering and refulgent then all the rest who drawing neer to the bed of the seruant of *Iesus Christ* embraced her tenderly and left her full of comfort. After her death one detained with the falling sickness and lame of one legg being not able to goe was brought to her sepulcher and there reposeing a litle, the legg offended was heard to make a great noise as if a dry staffe had bin broken: presently he was sett free of his twoe malladies. Other Criples and diseased were cured, one who had bin many yeares blind was led to her sepulcher but returned without guide hauing recouered his sight, by reason of these workes and many other glorious miracles this venerable *Clare* doth shine so bright that in her is accomplished what her mother heard in prayer before her birth: that she should bring forth a light which should illuminate all the world; the holy Church may iusty reioyce to haue produced and nourrished such a daughter who as a fruitfull mother of virtue hath by her perfect doctrine nourrished and nursed vp many disciples in Religion led by her example to

the

the seruice of *Christ Iesus*; the congregation of the faithfull ought allso to reioyce, for that the heauenly Spouse doth receaue their Sister for his Espouse and hath placed her in the middest of the delights of heauen: the quiers of Angells and of saints doe solemnise this feastiuity in heauen with great iubilie for the new wedding and Royall Espousalls of our Lord. It is therfore iust and conuenient that the Catholicke Church doe honour vpon earth her whom God hath exalted to heauen. For this cause wee with the generall consent of all the Cardinalls our Brethren & of all the Prelates who are at this present in the Apostolicall court of the Roman Church, and with their counseile wee confiding in the diuine power & with the authority of his B. Apostles Peeter & *Paule* and with our owne allso wee doe inregister and inrole B, *Clare* in to the Cata'logue of holy virgins, and wee doe admonish and exhort you by our Apostolicall authority commaunding you that the tweluth day of August you doe deuoutly celebrate the feast of this glorious virgin and doe cause it with great reuerence to be celebrated by your subiects to the end you may merit to haue her a fauorable dilligent and deuout intercessour to God for you: & to the end that the deuotion of faithfull Christians may be the more excited and awaked towardes her, and to the celebration of her festiuity, and to honour and visitt her sepulcher. wee confideing on the mercy of all

mighty God and the authority of the B. Apostles *Peeter* and *Paule* doe graunt vnto all faithfull Christians truely contrite and confessed that euery yeare on her feast and the Octaues therof visiting her sepulchre a yeare and forty dayes pardon of the pennance inioyned them. Giuen in the City of *Anagnie* the 18. of October 1235. and the first of our Popodome.

Notwithstanding this sacred virgin had bin most magnificently translated, and Canonised with the generall applause of all mē, yet there wanted not those who detracted her gloriously triumphing in heauen, and most rashly auouched she was not arriued thither, and more audaciously affirmed the Pope to be deluded in Canonising of her; this rumour no sooner came vnto the eares of his holynes but he presently wrote vnto the Superiour of the detractour, that he should first compell him to a recantation and then send him vnder safe conduct vnto his presence, the coppy of the Popes letter as followeth.

Allexander Bishop, seruant of the seruants of God to the Prouinciall Priour of the *Freer Preachers* in *Germanie*, Wee are mooued with extreame greife when wee behold those Fryers (who haue tyed them selues to the perpetuall seruice of God for the gaining of heauenly glory vnder a Religious habit) to be stayned with any enormous crime, truly admireing wee haue heard, and greeued wee declare, that a certaine Brother of thy Order propoūding the word of

God

Digitized by Google

God at *Vienne* in Allmaigne to the people, breaking forth in to prophane wordes against S. *Clare*, hath presumed with polluted lippes to reuile her, after it hath pleased the diuine mercy for the excellenty of her merits to illustrate her with admirable miracles, and the Apostolicall Sea with solemne deliberation had inroled her in the Catalogue of saints, affirmeing that the sayd *S. Clare* (whose B. soule doth shine in the presence of God) was not of the number of the blessed, & that the iudgment of the Sea Apostolicke in the sayd adscription did appeare erronious; wherfore the temerity & rashnes of that Brother ought to be punished that with an humble hart he may deplore the exorbitance of his presumption, and that the like boldnes be hindered in others, wee commaund vnto thy discretion by these Apostolicall writings in virtue of holy obedience, strictly commaunding that thou inquire diligently of the truth heerof, and if thou shalt find it to be as is related of the sayd Brother, that thou compell him to recant & abiure the sayd blasphemies in a publicke sermon without any difficulty or dilation, premiseing and admonition by Eccleſiasticall censure, and without appellation you cause him by this our authority to be strictly commaunded that within a competent time which you shall prefix him to apppeer personally before vs that he may receaue punishmẽt according to his demerits, and faile not by your letters faithfully to de-

Digitized by Google

clare vnto vs whatsoeuer you shall doe heerin, not omitting the day of his citation, nor the forme and manner of your proceeding. Giuen the third of the nones of Iune and the fixt yeare of our Popedome.

Of the miracles wrought by the merits of sainte Clare, *and first, of possessed persons.*

CHAP. LI.

THe operatiō of miracles is a great thing according to the Angelicall Doctour surpassing the Order of created nature, and in such sort appertaineth to the almighty powerfull hand of God only, who notwithstanding by his communicatiue goodnes doth raise and exalt creatures to the producing of of such effects, reseruing neuerthelesse to himselfe the choise of the creature, and the time, and occasions conuenient for the doeing of them; in such sort that this virtue can not receaue her Origine from the merits of him who worketh them, but rather from the inscrutable secrets of God, distributing his fauours and benefits to whome he best pleaseth and as he thinketh fitt, for to say that he hath regard to

the

the ſanctity of life of him by whome he will worke ſuch effects, it were to derogate from the glory of many great ſaints arriued to the culme of perfection and height of meritt of whom wee read no miracles; S. *Iohn Baptiſt* the procurſour of the ſonne of God, ſo renowned by the teſtimonie of the infallible truth hath wrought no miracles in his life, and neuertheles thoſe who haue wrought many are not eſteemed more holy then he; contrary wiſe wee know that at the laſt day many ſhall ſay Lord, Lord haue not wee propheſied in your name, and in virtue therof caſt out diuells and wrought many miracles: and for all this our Lord will not acknowledge them: no otherwiſe then the accurſed traitor *Iudas* (with many others) who in company of the Apoſtles did worke many miracles: S. *Hierome* vpon this paſſage ſaith that to propheſie, worke miracle, and caſt out diuells are not workes that doe allwayes proceed from the merit of him who worketh them but rather from the inuocation of the name of God in virtue wherof they are done, either for the greater condemnation of thoſe who vſe therin his diuine power leading a life oppoſitt to his diuine will: or to the vtillity of thoſe who ſee and hear ſuch wonders from whence they draw matter to prayſe and magnify him in whoſe name they are wrought wherby wee euidently ſee that ſuch extraordinary miracles are not allwayes aſſured teſtimonies of ſanctity, & that God doth not cõmuni-

cate

cate them to all saints indifferently, but only to those by whome he desireth to be so honored and serued as wee may obserue in his most humble seruant S. *Clare* whom he hath made most resplendent bright not only by the eminencie of her life but allso by the splendour of many miracles: for the satisfaction of the reader, I will make a collection of some, passing ouer an infinite number with silence. behold at the first incounter I presnt you with a famous victory gained by her intercessiõ against the diuell our mortall enemy, he tormented in a strange manner a child of Perusia called Iames, casting him one while in the fire one while in the riuer, other whiles dashing him furiously against the ground biteing the stones in such rage as brake his teeth therwith, tearing his haire and forceing bloud from his head, wresting his mouth so as he seemed a monster, so doubling and foulding his members that his feet would lye vpon his necke he was ordinarily afflicted with these torments, in such sort as twoe men sufficed not to guard him continually and detaine him from acts more impertinent and outragious as to teare his cloathes striping him selfe naked, and kill him selfe: many remeadies were applyed vnto him but all in vaine: his Father named *Guidalote* dispaired euer to see any amendment in him but in fine the diuine clemency excited in his heart a great confidence to haue recourse vnto *sainte Clare*, who

very

very often had subdued and tryumphed oue the infernall Dragon, conuerting vnto her with most inward groanes he sayd, O most sacred virgin worthy that all the world should honour thee, to thee I dedicate my sonne, and beseech thee to vouchsafe to restore him to his perfect health, and then replenished with no lesse pyetie then confidence he led him to the sepulcher of the sainte, and laying him vpon it, he began presently to pereceaue his perfect recouuery in such sort that neuer after he felt any such mallady or perturbation. *Alexandrina* of the towne of *Frasa* neer *Perusia* no lesse assaulted then the precedent by an abbominable Diuell in to whose power she was so abandoned, that he made her to Fly like a bird to the top of the rocke neer to the riuer of Tibur, from thence to hop to a litle branch of a tree which hung ouer the sayd riuer, and there hanging to play her Idle prankes, moreouer her left side was vtterly benumed and lame, the Phisitions had applyed all possible remeadies but in vaine: which caused her to thinke vpon supernaturall help, and excited by the great renowne of the merits of *S. Clara* she went vnto her tombe with intire confidence, and in an instant she was wholy freed from the oppression and seruitude of the Diuell, and her lamenes allso. An other in like sort of the same place who was fallen vnder the tiranoie of the mallignant ennemye experienced the mi-

serie which followeth the the lodgeing of such abbominable ghestes: for being assaulted with many strange infirmities, in fine she cast her selfe in to the armes of the pittifull mother S. *Clare* who failed not to afford her succour and remedie and that so soone as she had recourse to her sepulcher.

Of many miraculous cures of sundrie diseases.

CHAP. LII.

A French youth going to Rome in company of other of his Countrymen fell sicke and lay by the way being reduced to such extreamity by the force of his infirmity that he lost his sence and became so deformed as he seemed a monster rather then a reasonable creature which much afflicted his companions, besides he became so furious that he could not be held, for the finall and souueraine remeadye they bound him vpon a Beer and carryed him to the Church of S. *Clare*, and having layd him before her sepulcher they all fell to prayer, and imediatly he was perfectly cured.

A Citizen of the City of *Spoletum* called

Valentine

Valentine was exceedingly afflicted with the falling sickness in which he fell six times a day in whatsoeuer place he was, besides he had one foot wholy lame he was lead vnto the sepulcher of the saintse where haueing continued the space of twoe dayes and three nights in great deuotion the third day trying to stir his foot & haueing no bodye to help him, his foot made such a noyse by the extension and streaching forth of the bone and sinnewes as if a peece of timber had bin broken and incontinently finding his legg whole he neuer felt any more fitts of his other infirmity. A child of the same City called Iames of the age of twelue yeares and blind; being one day left for some space by him that guided him, he fell in to a pitt, brake his arme and hurt his head, the night insuing as he slept neer to the bridge of *Verne* there appeered vnto him a woeman who sayd, Iames wherfore doest thou not come to *Assisium* to be cured? the morning following he arose very early and amazed at the vision he related it to twoe other of his companyons who were allso blind, they answered truly wee haue heard of a Ladye who is lately dead at *Assisium* at whose sepulcher are wrought many notable miracles, which the young child hearing filled with confidence hastened with the help of his guide to to get thither, and in his way passing by *Spoletum*, he had againe the same vision wherfore he was more incourraged and animated to prosecute his enterprise,

being come to the Church he found it so full of People as he could gett no entrance which much afflicted him, wherfore extreamly tired with his iourney he layed himselfe downe in the porch and being fallen a sleep he heard the same voyce saying vnto him, Iames God will be favorable vnto thee if thou canst but gett entrance, awakeing he beganne presently to crye and begg of the people to make him place which he obtained, but before he entred he put of his shooes & cast of his vpper garment, and put his leather girdle about his necke and then with great humility and reuerence he drew neer to her sepulcher and in the interime of his prayer he fell in to a sweet slumber to whome S. *Clare* appeering sayd arise Iames for thou art cured, awakeing he found himselfe illuminated and his other hurts healed wherfore he excited all the beholders to sing prayses to God and his faithfull seruant S. *Clare*.

Digitized by Google

Of many Paralitiques and cripples cured by S. Clare,

CHAP. LIII.

A Cittezen of the City of *Perusia* called *Bonne Iohn* issuing one day forth of the City with many of his fellow Cittizens to fight against those of *Fullinium* dureing the skirmish he receaued on his hand the blow of a Flint stone wher-with the bone being broken he remained lame therof, he consulted many doctours about it and applyed many reamedies but without any alleadgment of his paine yea rather his dollour increased and ther was question to cutt of his hand; but he hauing heard wonders which God did worke by the intercession of glorious *sainte Clare*; full of confidence he made a vowe to goe visit her sepulcher and to present vnto her a hand of wax, being come thither with great deuotion and leaning to her tombe dedicating him selfe to her seruice his hand was instantly cured he yeelding thankes to God and this blessed virgin.

A young man natiue of *Castro Bitonie* being

so extenuated and consumed by a greiuous maladie which detained him the space of three yeares and reduced him to such extréme weaknes as hee stooped allmost to the ground wholy deuoid of hope euer to recouuer by humaine remeadye, for which cause his father who had imployed vpon him the greatest part of his meanes had recourse to the new sainte hauing heard the rumour of her great wonders he caused him to be carryed to her sepulcher whether he was no sooner arriued but he began to resent the effect of her intercession, for presently standing vp and leaping for ioye he inuited all that were present to magnify our Lord and dedicate them selues more seriously to the seruice of this sainte

In the towne of S. *Odrice* within the Diocesse of *Assisium* a child of tenne yeares old hauing bin borne pitifull lame, his feet being wrested awry so as if he were downe he could not gett vp againe without help, his mother had often times recommended him to S. *Francis* but found no help, wherfore what she could not obtaine of the Father she conceaued a confidence to impetrate of the daughter for hauing heard the admirable wonders which were dayly related to the honour of S. *Clare*, she caused her sonne to be carryed to the tomb be of the sainte, and presently his bones were settled in their due place and he was perfectly cured.

A Cittizen of *Agubium* named Iames of

France

France had a ſonne of fiue yeares old ſo lame as he could not goe; which he took very impatiently it ſeeming vnto him that the torment of his child was a reproch to his honour and Familie: when this child was vpon the ground he trailed and dragged him ſelfe in the durt not hauing forces to gett vp: the Father and mother vowed him to the ſainte, promiſing that if he were cured he ſhould be called hers; the vowe was no ſooner made but the child was cured, wherfore not to proue vngratfull for ſo great a benefitt receaued, full of ioye they cauſed him to goe to her ſepulcher.

A woeman of the Caſtle Menarie called *Plenaria*, being long afflicted with a great paine in her backe which ſo extenuated her forces that she could hardly goe, she cauſed her ſelfe to be lead to the ſepulcher of the ſainte, and the next day returned without any impediment

A woeman of *Peruſia* had her necke ſwollen bigger then her head with many ring Wormes and tettars she confiding a long time in the merits of S. *Clare* in fine receaued the recompence of her pious importunity for being one day at her ſepulcher ſurpriſed by the night she fell in to a great ſweat wherby the humours were euaporated and the ſwelling was all together aſſwaged no ſcarre or marke remaining.

How two children were saued and rescued from the furie of the Wolues by the merits of sainte Clare.

CHAP. LIV.

THe valley of *Spoletum* was in times past much hanted by store of wolues which did often prey vpon mans flesh, ther lived there abouts a woeman named *Benne* of *Mont-Gallien* of the Dioceſſe of *Aſſiſium* she had two children: one of them had bin some while before deuoured by thoſe furious beaſtes; and the other being gone but a little forth of the houſe while his mother was buſied in domeſticall affaires he was caught by a wolfe and carryed in to the woods: a labourer hauing heard the plaintiue voice of the child knew it, and gaue warning to the mother to looke at home for her child, whom not finding he was certaine it was her ſonne, which plunged her in to extreame ſorrow and impatiently bewayling she had recourſe to S. *Clare* in theſe tearmes ſacred and glorious Virgin *Clare* reſtore me my child, reſtore to the vnfortunate mother her ſonne, which if you doe not I will drowne my ſelfe: the meane while the neigh-

bours

bours pursued the wolfe, and found it had abandoned the child and the dogge licking the wounds which the mother fearing the resumed spirit, and with ioye she caused him to be carryed to the tombe of the saint, yeelding thankes for the fauour receaued and acknowledged her for her singular benefactour.

A little girle of the towne of Canary sitting at mid day in the fields, and a woeman resting her head in her lapp ther arriued a wolfe which frighted her not for that she thought it to be a dogge: the wolfe leaping vpon her caught her by the head and carryed her away, the woeman amazed inuoked S. *Clare* saying S. *Clare* help, help, I recommend vnto you this girle. The girle yet in the teeth of the deuourer directed her speech to the wolfe saying, cursed theefe how dareſt thou to carry any further her who is recommended to such a virgin? The wolfe as it were quite confounded at these wordes with great dexterity layd the girle downe vpon the ground and stuncke away like a theefe, and the girle escaped without hurt.

How many were deliuered from ship wrack by the inuocation of S. Clare.

CHAP. LV.

He who commaundeth the windes and the Seas would that they should allso obay at the very inuocation of the name of this glorious sainte; for ther being gone

forth of the Port of Pisa a shipp fraught with many persons, with intent to sayle towardes the Ile of Gardiana, they were no sooner entred the maine sea but a horrible tempest arose by the force wherof the bottome of the shipp leaked threatning eminent perrill and shipwracke: these vnfortunate had recourse to S. *Clare*, makeing a vowe vnto her that if they were deliuered by her intercession they would goe all naked to their very shirts with their girdles about their neck to visit her sacred Relikes at *Assisium*, each of them presenting a wax light of two pound waight. This vow being made, they saw to discend from heauen three great lights: the one settled vpon the for-part of the ship, an other vpon the poupe, and the third vpon the pumpe, by virtue wherof the leakes where the water did enter was closed and the *Sea* became quiet and calme, and with a gratious gale of wind the vessell was accompanyed and safely conducted by the help of these three lights to the port of Arestен wherin to being entred and safely landed and all the marchandize vnfraught the lights did presently disappeer and the vessell sunke downe and was drowned, those that were gott out acknowledging the miracle deuoutly performed their vow, yealding infinit thankes to God and to the sacred Virgin S. *Clare* for the great benefit receaued by her intercession.

LAVS DEO, MARIÆ, FRANCISCO, ET CLARÆ.

10 DEC 27
Digitized by Google

THE TABLE

OF THE CHAPTER.

HOw *saint Francis repaired three Churches.* fol. 5

Of the institution of the Freer Minors. 12

Of many and admirable acts wrought by the holy Order of S. Francis in the Church of God. But more especially in these latter ages, in the Indies. 17

The institution of the Order of saint Clare. 73

The institution of the third Order of S. Francis called the Order of pennance. 77

Of B. Hortulana the Mother of S. Clare. 83

The admirable patience of B. Hortulana and how

Digitized by Google

how she became Religious and of her happ death. 88
Of the birth of saint Clare and of the etimologie of the names of the mother and the daughter. 93
Of the infancie of S. Clare and of her virtuous exercises. 96
How sainte Clare came to the knowledge of S. Francis, 99
The holy resolution of S. Clare. 101
How S. Francis withdrew S. Clare from the world and made her Religious. 104
How the kindred of saint Clare laboured to withdraw her from the monasterie. 108
How the B. Virgin Agnes was converted by the prayer of her Sister sainte Clare and of the persecution she indured by her kindred. 111
How S. Francis gaue the habit to B. Agnes, and of the dignitie of the Monasterie of saint Damian. 115
How saint Clare by her example & renowne hath drawne many daughters after her 118
Monasteries which were built in sainte Clares time. 127
Of diuers great Princesses who became Religious

gious women of the Order of S. Clare. 131
Of the humilitie of S. Clare. 137
Of the perfect obedience of S. Clare 141
Of the Poverty of S. Clare and her great zeale to this virtue. 143
How saint Clare demaunded of Pope Innocent the fourth the priuiledge of poverty. 147
The Bull of Pope Innocent the fourth how the Religious of S. Clare may not be constrained to receaue rents or possessions. 148
Of the great providence of God towards sainte Clare. 150
Of the austere mortification fasties and abstinence of S. Clare. 153
How saint Francis and sainte Clare made their refection together and of an admirable rapt. 156
The coppie of a letter which sainte Agnes writ from Florence to her Sister sainte Clare, and to all the Religious of S. Damian. 158
Of the great desire sainte Clare had to suffer martirdome for the loue of her Creatour. 161
How saint Francis gaue his benediction to S.

Digitized by Google

Clare before his death and how his body was shewed vnto her after his decease. 164
Of the spirituall doctrine where with saint Clare nourished her daughters. 168
Of the great desire she had to heare the word of God. 172
Of the sermons of sainte Clare in her prayer. 174
How great account Pope Gregorie the ninth made of the prayers of sainte Clare, and of a letter to this effect. 179
How sainte Clare tormented the diuell by her prayers. 182
Of the great deuotion of S. Francis and sainte Clare to the Natiuitie of our Redeemer & of two notable miracles. 184
The deuotion of S. Clare to the holy sacrament. 188
How the Mores were driuen from the monasterie and the City of Assisium by the virtue of the holy Sacrament of the Altar and by the prayers of sainte Clare. 190
How the City of Assisium was an other time deliuered by the prayers of sainte Clare. 194
Of the feruent loue of S. Clare to the passion

of

of Iesus Christ. 196
How Sainte Clare by the signe of the crosse wrought many miracles. 199
How Sainte Clare beseought her superiours that she might enioye the presence of her Sister whome she beholdeth three times crowned by an Angell. 203
Of the admirable constancie of S. Clare in sickues. 205
How the Cardinall Protectour of the Order visited Sainte Clare in her sicknes. 209
How Pope Innocent the fourth visited Sainte Clare before her death and of a notable miracle done in his presence. 210
Sainte Clares patience in her sickues. And how she comforted her Sister Agnes. 214
Of the spirit of Prophecie in S. Clare and how she was visited by the Religious of Florence. 217
How many persons of note and disciples of S. Francis assisted at S. Clare death. 220
How S. Clare was visited by our Redeemer and his glorious virgin Mother and of her B. departure. 222
Of the honorable obsequies of S. Clare. 225
Of the Canonization of S. Clare. 228

Of

Digitized by Google

Of the translation of the bodyes of S. Francis and S. Clare, with other particulars. 131

Bulla of the Canonization of S. Clare. 233

Of the miracles wrought by the merits of S. Clare, and first, of possessed persons. 246

Of many miraculous cures of sundrie diseases. 250

How two children were saued and reserued from the wolues by the merits of S. Clare. 253

Of many Paralitiques and Cripples cured by S. Clare. 253

How many were deliuered from shipwrack by her inuocation of S. Clare.

APPROBATIO.

HÆc historia de *vita S. Claræ* ex Gallico sermone in Anglicum transfusa, digna est quæ præli beneficio lucem accipiat, vtpote nihil habens Catholicæ Fidei aduersam aut bonis moribus, sed multa ad ædificationem legentium, Datum Duaci *24.* Maij, *1635.*

Georgius Coluenerius S. Theol. Do &. & regius ordinariusque Professor, Colleg. ecclesię S. Petri Præpositus Duacensis Vniuersitatis Cancellarius, & librorum Censor.

Digitized by Google

Faults escaped in the Print.

PAg. 16. in a distincte character, reade distincte chapter. pag. 17. for particularities, reade generalities. p. 18. fieles, reade fields. p. 19. dele it. pag. 21. Al as, reade Alas. pag. 26. one the, reade one of the. pag. 27. wherein, reade hearin. p. 28. pulchra, reade pulchri. p. 29. Antastick, reade Antarstick. pag. 32. sewed, reade sowed. ibidem, where, reade were. pag. 33. vnto reade into, p. 35. land Bromise, reade land of Promise. ibidem, bone, reade borne. pag. 51. conuincent, reade convincing, ibidem before his reuolt, reade before his reuolte solaced. ib. Margaret, r. Katherine. 52. in as, reade in as much. ibidem, ingeniously, reade he ingenuously. p. 53. 3. Order reade 3. Orders. ibidem downes Scepter, reade downe Scepters. p. 54. where, reade were. p. 56. the day, reade at the day. pag 57. grace, reade graces. pag. 59. shouggish, reade sluggish. pag 60 examplary, reade exemplarily, ibidem, his passion, reade of his passion. ibidem, Sonne reade Sunne. pag. 61. that he, reade that as he, ibidem, which reade that which. p. 63. glorie for, reade glorie of ibidem, taske, reade taxe, ibidem, neither, reade either. pag. 65 they the more, reade they may the more, ibidem, with ground, reade which ground. pag. 66. then whose, reade then they whose, ibid. wholy, reade holy. p. 67. vocatitur, reade vocabitur, ibidem Christ, reade Christ's, ibidem hauen, reade hauing, pag. 68. haue though, reade I haue thought, p. 70. heigh, reade height, p. 71. demomstrated, reade demonstrated. ibid. Romana vero dicitur, reade Romanus vero dicitur. &c.

BRITISH

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

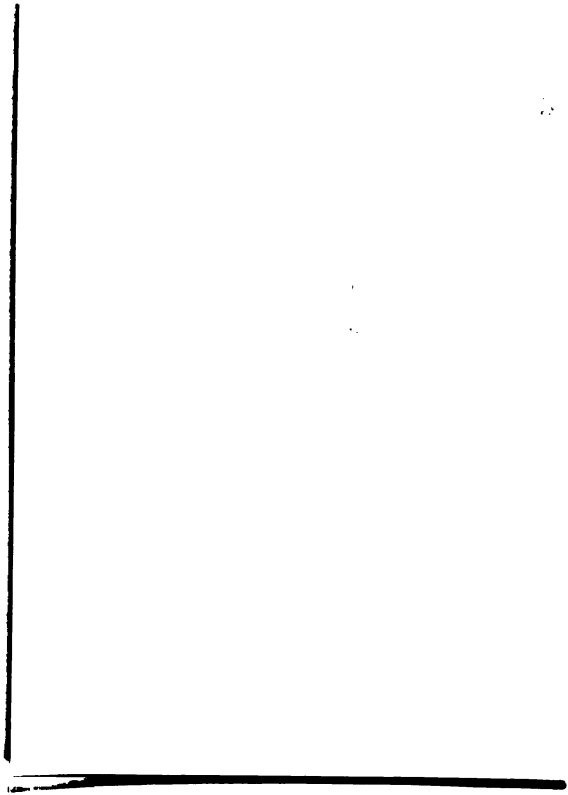
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

RILEY DUNN & WILSON 2003